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Provisional

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Thursday, 22 May 2003, 9.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Akram	(Pakistan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	Chile	Mr. Maquieira
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-36758 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Expression of sympathy to the Government and the people of Algeria in connection with the recent earthquake

The President: At the outset of the meeting, I should like, on behalf of the Security Council, to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Government and the people of Algeria in connection with the earthquake which occurred in the vicinity of Thenia, resulting in considerable devastation and loss of life. I would request the representative of Algeria to convey to his Government and the families of the victims our sincere condolences.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

The President: I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, at this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2003/556, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by a show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, France, Germany, Guinea, Mexico, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

*The Syrian Arab Republic did not participate in the voting.**

The President: The result of the voting is as follows: 14 votes in favour, none against and no abstentions. One member of the Council did not participate in the voting. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 1483 (2003).

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. Negroponte (United States of America): The lifting of sanctions marks a momentous event for the people of Iraq. It is the turning of a historical page that should brighten the future of a people and a region. The threatening actions and defiance of Saddam Hussain's brutal regime prolonged the imposition of sanctions for nearly 13 years. Those sanctions have now been lifted.

The liberation of Iraq has cleared the path for today's action. We all witnessed an Iraqi State under Saddam Hussain that was unwilling adequately to feed its people — a State in which critical infrastructure projects were left to languish while luxurious palaces were built, and a State in which free political expression was cruelly repressed and punished. Together, the Council has taken decisive action to help the Iraqi people.

My Government called for this vote this morning because we firmly believed that each additional day of debate over the language of this important text would further hinder recovery. The gas lines are long despite blessedly little damage to Iraq's residual infrastructure. After more than a decade of being frozen out of the world economy, it is time for the Iraqi people to benefit from their natural resources.

President Bush and Prime Minister Blair said last month at Hillsborough that the United Nations should play a vital role in rebuilding Iraq. In passing this resolution we have achieved much for the people of Iraq. By recognizing the fluidity of the political situation and that decisions will be made on the

* At the 4762nd (resumed) meeting, in the afternoon of 22 May, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic took the floor in connection with this vote, explaining that the Syrian Arab Republic would have voted in favour of this resolution had it been granted the additional time before the voting that it had requested on more than one occasion. The text of his statement is in the official record of the 4762nd (resumed) meeting.

ground, the Security Council has provided a flexible framework under Chapter VII for the coalition provisional Authority, Member States, the United Nations and others in the international community to participate in the administration and reconstruction of Iraq and to assist the Iraqi people in determining their political future, establishing new institutions and restoring economic prosperity to the country.

The resolution affirms our commitment to the development of an internationally recognized representative Government of Iraq. It creates a robust mandate for a Special Representative of the Secretary-General, including to work with the people of Iraq, the Authority and others concerned — including neighbouring States — to help make this vision a reality. The resolution establishes a framework for an orderly phase-out of the oil-for-food programme, thereby preserving, for a transitional period, what has become an important safety net for the people of Iraq. The resolution establishes transparency in all processes, and United Nations participation in monitoring the sale of Iraqi oil resources and expenditures of oil proceeds. In that context, I am pleased to announce the creation of the Development Fund for Iraq in the Central Bank of Iraq. As the resolution underlines, the Authority will disburse the funds only for the purposes it determines to benefit the Iraqi people.

The resolution lifts export restrictions to Iraq, with the exception of trade in arms and related materiel not required by the coalition provisional Authority. Aviation restrictions are also lifted. But Iraq's disarmament obligations remain, and Member States remain barred from assisting Iraq in acquiring weapons of mass destruction and proscribed missile systems or proceeding with civil nuclear activities so long as those restrictions remain in effect.

The resolution provides Iraq with adequate time to recover capacity eroded during the sanctions years, yet it preserves its obligations to Kuwait and others who suffered from Saddam Hussain's aggression dating from 1990. It addresses Iraq's sovereign debt, the protection of Iraqi antiquities and accountability for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the previous regime. It also directs Member States to act quickly to seize and return to the Iraqi people money stolen by Saddam Hussain's regime.

But we cannot be complacent. Now that we have adopted this resolution the work must begin on implementing it. The Secretariat and the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General must prepare for their work on the urgent humanitarian, reconstruction and political tasks to which it will contribute. Member States must work to fulfil the obligations and provisions contained in the resolution. For our part, in addition to our responsibilities in Iraq as leaders of the coalition provisional Authority, we will undertake to inform the Council on a quarterly basis of progress in implementing the resolution, in the spirit of paragraph 24.

The United States is appreciative of the constructive spirit with which the Council has considered and strengthened the provisions of the text we put forward with our co-sponsors. We look forward to working closely with all members to implement this important decision.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): The Iraqi people must take control of its own future, both at home, where a representative and sovereign Government must be established as speedily as possible by the Iraqis themselves, and within the international community, to which Iraq must soon return.

There are many challenges. The situation in the country remains unstable. Security has not yet been fully restored. The humanitarian situation of the people remains precarious. Economic and social reconstruction will take time and require the energetic, ongoing mobilization of the international community. A political process leading to the establishment of representative institutions that respect the rights of each Iraqi has yet to be launched.

The resolution that we have just adopted is not perfect. Significant improvements, however, were introduced at each stage of the negotiations. We believe that it now provides a credible framework within which the international community will be able to lend support to the Iraqi people. That is why we supported it. Now, all of its potential must be fully exploited in order, without further ado, to undertake the effort of rebuilding Iraq in all areas.

Security must be restored as soon as possible throughout the territory of Iraq. The resolution affirms the obligations of the occupying Powers in this area, in conformity with their obligations under international

humanitarian law. It also recalls that the verified disarmament of Iraq remains our shared objective and in this regard preserves the role of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission and of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Only the international inspectors can, in due course, reassure the international community that this objective has been attained.

With the lifting of civilian sanctions and the forthcoming resumption of petroleum exports, Iraq should have the resources necessary to rebuild its economy and improve the humanitarian and social situations of its people. The resolution recalls that these resources, which belong to the Iraqi people, should be used exclusively for their benefit and in the greatest possible transparency. The International Advisory and Monitoring Board of the Development Fund for Iraq, established under the resolution, will serve as guarantor in that respect.

The resolution also provides for a gradual winding down of the oil for food programme. We must ensure that this transfer of responsibilities takes place in an orderly manner in practice — that is, in a manner compatible with the improvement of the humanitarian situation of the Iraqis, the credibility of the United Nations and respect for Iraq's commitments.

In the area of humanitarian affairs and reconstruction, and in particular in the political sphere, the resolution substantiates the essential role of the United Nations, which France, alongside many others, has tirelessly defended. More than ever before, the strong and independent involvement of the United Nations in defining and leading the political process will condition the success of this exercise — in other words, its ownership by the Iraqi people and its acceptance by countries of the region and by the international community. The stability of Iraq, and hence of the entire region, is at stake. We also believe that the process of political transition in Iraq would gain in effectiveness and credibility if a precise procedure and timetable for establishing a representative and internationally recognized Iraqi Government were defined.

We have every faith that the Secretary-General will nominate the best possible Special Representative. We assure him in advance of our full support.

The resolution that we have just adopted attributes to the occupying Powers broad authorities in the area of international humanitarian law and the necessary means to exercise those authorities. By voting in favour of the resolution, France sought to express its support for this difficult endeavour, which now involves the entire international community. These broad authorities entail responsibilities vis-à-vis, first, the Iraqi people, which must take its own destiny into its own hands as soon as possible; and secondly, the international community, because it has recognized the existence of the rights and obligations of the Authority and addressed specific requests to it.

The Security Council must therefore continue to be closely involved in the situation in Iraq, in particular through the information which the Special Representative, the United States and the United Kingdom will regularly provide it, pursuant to the resolution. It will reassess all the provisions of the resolution within 12 months' time, at the latest.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): I warmly welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at this important meeting.

The United Kingdom welcomes the adoption of this resolution and the constructive negotiations which preceded it. The whole United Nations system will hope that the vote which we have just taken marks a return to sustained consensus on one of the most difficult foreign policy issues we have faced. The United Kingdom will work to maintain that collective approach.

We shall be discussing in detail later this morning the response to the humanitarian situation in Iraq. The United Kingdom has operated in Iraq from the beginning strictly in accordance with the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Regulations.

I should like to highlight three elements of this important resolution. First, it sets out a vital and independent post-conflict role, covering a wide range of important areas, for the United Nations. I hope that the Secretary-General will very rapidly appoint and deploy a strong Special Representative to drive forward the United Nations activities. The United Kingdom looks forward to working alongside that appointment, not least to ensure the early establishment of an internationally recognized representative Government by the people of Iraq.

Secondly, it lifts the burden of the most comprehensive sanctions regime ever imposed by the

United Nations. With economic sanctions terminated, the efforts of the people of Iraq to rebuild their economy will be significantly strengthened. The new Development Fund for Iraq will ensure that oil revenues are used in a transparent manner to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people, assist economic reconstruction, allow for continued disarmament and promote other purposes benefiting the people of Iraq. An International Advisory and Monitoring Board, coupled with independent auditing, will help guarantee that Iraq's resources are once again used exclusively to benefit its people.

Thirdly, the resolution gives a sound basis for the international community to come together, in the interests of the Iraqi people, consistent with international law. We look forward to increased international and United Nations involvement helping the people of Iraq to reform their institutions, rebuild their country and enjoy conditions of stability and security in a stable regional environment.

Throughout our negotiations on this resolution, I said that it was not an omnibus — that it did not seek to resolve every issue. Among the issues we will need to take up in due course are the functions of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency as they relate to the complete disarmament of Iraq under previous resolutions. The United Kingdom continues to see a role for both bodies in the eventual confirmation of disarmament and perhaps, if the Council agrees, in longer-term monitoring and verification. The Council will also need to consider the future of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission, the maintenance of the arms embargo, progress on repatriating Kuwaiti and third-State nationals and the Kuwaiti archives, and other issues flowing from or relevant to this resolution. I can assure colleagues that the United Kingdom is committed to reporting regularly on its efforts and would expect to do so on a quarterly basis. We also are committed to a serious review of the resolution within 12 months, considering further steps that might be necessary.

The adoption of this resolution lays the foundation for an operational partnership between the United Nations and other players in Iraq, including, most importantly, the Iraqis themselves. The experience and expertise of the United Nations in returning a troubled country to the hands of its own people is an instrument which the United Kingdom admires and respects. It must be fully used in Iraq.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): The resolution on Iraq that we have just adopted gives us a basis for practical steps on the ground in order to improve the conditions for the Iraqi people and to stabilize the political and economic situation.

This resolution is a compromise reached after intensive and sometimes difficult negotiations. By definition, it does not fulfil the every wish of all parties. But as compared to the initial draft of the sponsors, we have achieved substantial improvements. The resolution provides a framework in which the United Nations has been strengthened and can take a central role in the political and economic process.

The Secretary-General will now be represented by a Special Representative who we expect to fully implement his independent responsibilities in promoting the political process leading to the early formation of an internationally recognized, representative Government of Iraq. The Security Council is to be fully informed by the Secretary-General as well as by the United States and the United Kingdom. The Security Council will review this resolution within 12 months and, if necessary, consider further steps.

The disarmament issue is kept on the Council's agenda, and funding for the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is ensured. In the economic sector, a maximum of transparency will be achieved. The International Advisory and Monitoring Board overseeing the Development Fund for Iraq assembles a vast body of expertise on rebuilding economies ravaged by war and totalitarian systems. We expect the Board to take full responsibility with respect to its task of providing transparency and that the Security Council will be receiving regular reports on its work.

In this resolution, we have left behind the divisions of the past for the sake of the people of Iraq. Sanctions will be lifted. A process of political and economic reconstruction will be started. It is important now to give the Iraqi people the perspective of building a democratic and stable Government, at peace with itself and its regional neighbours — a respected member of the family of nations. The United Nations

system will help them to realize it. Germany stands ready to contribute to their efforts.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I believe that this is a very important day for the people of Iraq as well as for the United Nations. The Security Council, as a whole, has understood that the time to be realistic has now come. Some may say that this resolution is not perfect, but no one can deny that it provides an appropriate legal framework for dealing with the special, anomalous and grave situation facing the international community.

I believe, therefore, that we have adopted an important, indispensable and relevant resolution. I can say this because, leaving aside the recent past, it sets out some fundamental principles: first, that of the sovereignty and integrity of Iraq; secondly, the principle that the Iraqis alone are the owners of their political future and their economic resources; thirdly, guidelines for the conduct of the authorities that will be managing this transitional period in Iraq — and transparency in economic affairs is not the least relevant of these guidelines; and, fourthly, it provides an important and independent role for the United Nations.

I very much hope that today, in addition to being a significant day, will be a day of hope, primarily for the people of Iraq. We wish them in the immediate future peace, stability and the fullest freedom. But we hope also that for the United Nations, having overcome the mood of recent days, today's consensus will augur well with respect to the many challenges facing the world and the Council today — African issues, terrorism, the situation in the Middle East, and so on.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation, too, welcomes the presence of Secretary-General Kofi Annan here today. Mexico decided to vote in favour of the resolution and thus to join the near-unanimous agreement reached in the Security Council with respect to this important instrument, which sets in motion the process of Iraq's reconstruction.

The motivation behind this decision is the intention to make a contribution so that, without further delay, the parties involved can discharge their responsibilities and attend to the urgent needs of the Iraqi people. Mexico's immediate goal is to bring about a normalization of the situation in Iraq, so that the people themselves, by fully recovering and exercising their sovereignty, will be in a position, at the earliest opportunity, to dictate their own political future.

The text of this resolution in undoubtedly a compromise text. The negotiations were fruitful. Throughout that process, changes were made and progress achieved that made possible near-unanimous agreement. During the intensive discussions that preceded the vote, the members of the Security Council had to rebuild their understanding and find new ways of reconciling their views in order to reclaim the purpose and direction of the Council as regards Iraq.

Now, in the context of the post-conflict situation, Mexico believes that the Security Council must look to the future, act effectively, and take decisions and apply measures aimed at ensuring that reconstruction brings about the longed-for well-being of the Iraqi people, within the framework of the restoration of its sovereignty and independence, in an atmosphere of stability and justice for Iraq and security and peace for the entire region.

The new consensus achieved in the Council with respect to the adoption of the resolution is based precisely on the fact that, over and above our differences, we have an institutional commitment and obligation that derives from the mandate entrusted to this organ by the Charter of the United Nations. Consensus within the Council and the institutional commitment of its members is expressed through the agreement to lift all the sanctions — except, in part, the arms embargo — that were imposed on Iraq, and the termination within six months of the oil for food programme — all of this in order to promote the early reconstruction of Iraq.

This resolution has many other angles and implications as regards the manner in which the circumstances in Iraq will be handled, but it serves as the starting point for a process, the complexity and challenges of which are still not clearly understood. It provides for fostering conditions that will lead to what Mexico hopes will be the prompt termination of the military occupation and the rapid establishment by the Iraqi people of an autonomous and legitimate Government, with full capacity to engage in international relations.

In parallel, the resolution establishes the independent role and the tasks to be shouldered by the United Nations, as regards both the promotion and coordination of humanitarian assistance, and the

creation of conditions for the establishment of a sovereign and autonomous Iraqi Government.

On that basis, the challenge of the United Nations will be to ensure respect for the fundamental principles on which the Organization is based and vigorously to become involved in the reconstruction process, to guide and support the Iraqi people in achieving their long-term economic and social goals.

Beyond the resolution itself, the United Nations role in Iraq will depend to a considerable extent, on the one hand, on the singleness of purpose, the commitment and the agility of the Security Council, and on the other, on the professional ability and capacities of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, whose post is created in this resolution.

Once the Special Representative's office is set up, the United Nations will have to involve itself proactively not only in promoting humanitarian assistance but also in many other tasks, such as sustainable development, gender equality, the defence and promotion of human rights including the investigation of violations committed in recent years, and the crafting of legislation to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Under the resolution, both the Secretary-General and the occupying Powers must keep the Security Council periodically informed of their activities. This should make it possible for the Council to remain vigilant to the situation in Iraq, to be attentive to circumstances in the field, and thus to modify or update the terms of the resolution as required.

From my country's perspective, the process of Iraq's reconstruction, which starts with this resolution, does indeed require an alert and committed attitude on the part of the Security Council. We must be careful to ensure that all the parties involved in Iraq will facilitate compliance with, or the restoration of, the rights to which reference is made in the resolution, mainly those relating to sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to the Iraqi people's right to their natural resources, particularly oil, and their inalienable right to endow themselves with their preferred form of government.

This resolution does not authorize the establishment of long-term commitments that would alienate the sovereignty of the Iraqi people over its petroleum resources. At this stage, all proceeds should be strictly channelled towards Iraq's development and the improvement of its people's living conditions. Mexico has advocated this throughout the negotiations, and it is in those terms that we understand the resolution. It contemplates an Advisory and Monitoring Board that must guarantee that Iraq's oil is handled in a totally transparent manner during this stage. The Security Council will be kept informed by the Secretary-General of the functioning of this Board, and it will have to make sure that the commitment of transparency is met.

Iraq's future poses a great challenge to the United Nations. If we are to confront it squarely, we must strengthen our own Organization.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Resolution 1483 (2003), adopted today by the Security Council, is of particular importance for the Iraqi people and also for the future activities of the United Nations on key problems relating to the maintenance of international peace and security in new conditions.

The Russian Federation is pleased at the results obtained during the negotiations. Definitely — and many colleagues stressed this point — there was compromise. But, to make this compromise possible, all participants in the negotiations took steps to accommodate one another, even on matters where it seemed at first to be difficult to narrow the gaps between initial positions. The fact that this was largely possible attests to the recognition by all Council members that the legitimate and just settlement of the Iraqi problem is possible only on a collective basis, and based on the United Nations Charter, which provides reliable legal frameworks for resolving the most complex tasks of our day.

Of course, the resolution that was worked out as a result of these negotiations does not give final answers to all questions on the Iraqi settlement. Its significance is primarily that it creates an international legal basis for joint efforts to be made by the entire international community to deal with the crisis and outlines clear guidelines and principles for those efforts.

I would refer, first of all, to the observance by the occupying Powers of international humanitarian law; secondly, to the guaranteeing of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq; and finally, to the speedy restoration, in practice, of the right of the Iraqi people

themselves to determine their political future and to gain control over their natural resources.

The attainment of those goals should be facilitated by the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who has been entrusted with independent functions in virtually all areas, including participation in the political process, through the creation of an internationally recognized Government of Iraq. The Special Representative would have direct access to Iraqi political forces and to other countries of the Middle East region.

The resolution assigns an important role to the United Nations, to the Security Council and to the Secretary-General at all stages of the settlement. The Council will regularly monitor the entire process through consideration of reports from the Secretary-General and from representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom about what they are doing in Iraq. It is important that in 12 months' time there will be a thorough Council review of the resolution's implementation, including the elaboration of further steps that might be necessary for an Iraqi settlement.

This resolution significantly increases the opportunities for resolving the acute ongoing humanitarian problems facing the Iraqi people and for rehabilitating the devastated infrastructure and restoring a normally functioning economy. To that end, apart from the lifting of economic sanctions, within the next six months, the potential of the oil-for-food programme should be actively and fully used, with maximum attention being given to decisions already taken within the framework of the programme at previous stages.

It is important that agreement was reached in a gradual transition, without any sudden movements, from humanitarian programmes to new methods of exporting Iraqi oil and spending the export earnings until a legitimate, internationally recognized Iraqi Government is established.

All these activities in the interim period will be transparent and will be carried out under the control of the International Advisory and Monitoring Board, with the participation of the plenipotentiary representative of the Secretary-General, who will report back to the Security Council.

The resolution clearly reaffirms the need to clarify the issue of Iraqi programmes of weapons of mass destruction, taking into account previous Council decisions as well as the mandates of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The next opportunity to consider that aspect of the Iraqi settlement will come at the beginning of next month, when the Council receives its regular report from UNMOVIC. We look forward to receiving from coalition forces, as requested in the resolution, information on their efforts to find traces of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction programmes. We hope that the corresponding provisions of the resolution will make it possible, de jure and de facto, finally to reach closure on this issue and to implement Council resolutions that seek to prevent the resumption of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programmes.

Also of great importance is the need to complete the implementation of other United Nations resolutions on individuals reported missing during the first Gulf war, on the payment of compensation following that war and on the settlement of Iraq's foreign debt. That should take place in accordance with international standards, inter alia, within the Paris Club.

On the whole, agreement on resolution 1483 (2003) reaffirmed the desire of all members of the Council constructively to find generally acceptable agreements that will genuinely help the Iraqi people to regain full sovereignty as soon as possible. We are convinced that this task must remain central to our future efforts.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): Bulgaria welcomes the adoption of resolution 1483 (2003) because it will enable the Iraqi people to regain full control of their future. The Bulgarian delegation was very happy to participate in the discussions leading to the adoption of the present resolution: a very constructive spirit reigned during the discussions, making possible a genuine dialogue among Council members. The sponsors of the original draft resolution listened to the concerns of other Council members, who, in turn, were able to respond with a willingness to compromise that ultimately proved very useful.

Bulgaria welcomes the adoption of the resolution because the United Nations is to play a vital and independent, even central role in resolving Iraq's problems during the post-conflict period. Problems will be resolved through a genuine partnership between the

Special Representative of the Secretary-General and coalition forces. We have complete confidence in the Secretary-General as he selects his Special Representative, and we promise him my country's full support in the Security Council and on the ground.

Beyond the question of Iraq, we must recognize that in this period of globalization, the United Nations has become an essential, indispensable organization. If the United Nations did not exist, we would have to invent it.

Mr. Traoré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Guinea welcomes the adoption of resolution 1483 (2003), which in many respects constitutes a success for the United Nations in general and for the Security Council in particular. The Council has returned to consensus: its golden rule. This resolution is a real source of satisfaction for my delegation, as it responds to the urgent humanitarian needs in Iraq, to which my country attaches great importance.

During the discussions, our effort was inspired by the abiding concern to stress the overriding interests of the Iraqi people, who have already paid a heavy price under the dictatorship and the sanctions regime. That concern is reflected in the urgent need to recognize the Iraqis' right to self-determination and control over their country's natural resources. It should also be noted that this resolution is proof of the Council's ability to overcome differences and regain its unity, whatever the crisis it faces. It certainly puts an end to questions arising from the Iraqi crisis with respect to the Council's credibility and effectiveness — in short, its ability to best carry out its primary mission of ensuring international peace and security.

Our vote in favour of resolution 1483 (2003) means that we are in favour of the immediate lifting of sanctions, which are no longer justified.

Finally, my delegation welcomes the important role given to the United Nations in the rebuilding of Iraq. We express the hope that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General will fully play his rightful role in this crucial phase for Iraq's future.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at today's meeting.

China has always supported and attached great importance to the role of the United Nations on the issue of Iraq and, even more, in the area of post-conflict reconstruction. Such involvement will not only contribute to long-term peace and stability in Iraq in particular and the Gulf and the Middle East region in general, but also contribute to maintaining the credibility and authority of the United Nations.

The Chinese delegation, with a constructive attitude, actively participated in the consultations on the draft resolution that has been adopted as resolution 1483 (2003) and proposed a number of amendments. We note that the sponsoring countries took into consideration the views of other parties and revised the original text. Some of China's specific concerns have not been resolved satisfactorily, but in the light of the Iraqi people's urgent need for reconstruction, China voted in favour of the resolution. We hope that resolution 1483 (2003) can be smoothly and effectively implemented; that the Secretary-General can appoint a Special Representative as soon as possible; and that the United Nations can effectively play its due role in the process of post-conflict reconstruction in Iraq.

As well, we hope that Iraq, a country that has suffered tremendously from hardship and war, can return to normalcy and rejoin the international community as soon as possible.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): As it did on 8 November 2002 at the time of the adoption of resolution 1441 (2002), Cameroon would like to begin by welcoming the presence among us of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan.

We have just unanimously adopted resolution 1483 (2003), on the post-conflict management of Iraq. Cameroon welcomes that event.

This is a great moment for the Council, which has returned to the path of reconciliation. The resolution sends a message of confidence in the Iraqi people, who today deserve to freely take charge of their economic and social affairs, as well as their political future. I will return to that point later.

From the outset, Cameroon supported the ideas and basic principles of resolution 1483 (2003). Cameroon believed from the beginning that the situation no longer justified the maintenance of economic sanctions against Iraq. Cameroon was convinced of the need for the United Nations again to play a role in the situation in Iraq. Finally, Cameroon believed that it was for the Iraqis themselves to define the type of Government they wanted and to choose

their own leaders. All of those concerns have been taken into account in the resolution, and we welcome that.

As we said earlier, the Council has returned to the path of dialogue, consultation and unity. Given its unique role in the maintenance of peace and security, that has sent a very strong signal to the international community. We hope that the women and men who will be working to implement the provisions of this historic text will do so in a coordinated and complementary fashion, in the sole interests of the Iraqi people. Such is Cameroon's appeal to the coalition Authority, the Secretary-General and the Member States, which, in the near future, will be involved in rebuilding that great country.

As we said earlier, resolution 1483 (2003) sends a twofold message. It is an expression of confidence in the women and men of Iraq, whose qualities are recognized by all. We have every confidence that the Iraqi people will be able to draw on their thousands of years of history to find the necessary moral resources to heal the wounds resulting from the tragic past 30 years. We have every confidence that they will build a new Iraq — no longer a country of arms and tears, but one that is faithful to its destiny and to its name, which means "country of waters", and, therefore, "country of life".

Resolution 1483 (2003) thus sends a message of confidence. It also sends a message of active solidarity on the part of the international community. The Council has been unanimous in telling the Iraqis, forcefully and unequivocally, that the international community will work side by side with them in support of them — not in place of them. At the same time, in order to ensure the effectiveness of this support, the Council calls upon all external actors — the coalition, the United Nations, Member States and non-governmental organizations — to coordinate their activities, to complement each other and to avoid any kind of competition among themselves, which would definitely be counterproductive.

In that regard, the need for transparency and effectiveness is for us absolutely essential. The guarantee of our collective credibility is at stake.

Mr. Maquieira (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): The resolution that has just been adopted, with the support of Chile, contains important provisions concerning the political process in Iraq, the role of the United Nations, with specific instructions for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and for the supervision of the Development Fund for Iraq, and what the Council must do 12 months from now with regard to implementation.

The resolution lifts the sanctions imposed on Iraq — a situation not appropriate to the needs of the Iraqi people — and thus takes an important and urgently required step towards normalizing the economy of that country and integrating it into the international community.

Furthermore, the resolution just adopted envisages a process for the progressive winding down of the oil for food programme in an orderly and equitable manner that is not detrimental to the Iraqi people. Another important fact is that the resolution has made it possible to restore the Council's collective capacity to agree on a process of political, economic and social reconstruction for Iraq.

For Chile, the text meets the need to safeguard the country's political sovereignty, its territorial integrity and its people's control over the natural resources. In short, the Council has adopted an important resolution today, based on a strong political agreement that will be very important in the various stages of its implementation. It focuses on significantly improving the conditions of life for the Iraqi people after decades of suffering.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): The Angolan delegation, which voted in favour of the resolution, welcomes the outcome of the vote. The delegation of Angola extends its appreciation to the sponsors of the resolution — Spain, the United States and the United Kingdom — as well as to the other members of the Council for the constructive spirit of compromise in the process leading to the adoption of the resolution. We commend the efforts undertaken by all to ensure that the resolution could obtain the largest possible support from Council members.

My delegation supported the resolution on the understanding that its adoption would contribute to restoring the necessary unity of purpose of the Security Council — unity that was bruised by the divisions over the question of Iraq that characterized recent months. The vote also reinstates the spirit of the principle of multilateralism in the Council's decisions and actions, thus enabling the Council to better play the role in the maintenance of international peace and security

entrusted to it by the international community. It is also our understanding that, through the adoption of the resolution and by compliance with its provisions, the occupying Powers of Iraq are legally bound to strictly respect international law, the Iraqi people's sovereign rights and their right to the natural resources of the country, as well as the right to freely determine, in due course — I hope, soon — their political future.

The role that the United Nations will play in Iraq's post-war processes is an important feature of the resolution. My Government looks forward to working with the United Nations with a view to ensuring that the objectives set out in the resolution are fully met. The resolution takes into account the United Nations wealth of experience, which will guarantee that this role is indeed vital in all respects.

It is my Government's conviction that the resolution safeguards the fundamental rights of the Iraqi people. We hope that an environment permitting Iraqis to govern themselves and to choose a representative Government will very soon be created in Iraq.

It is my delegation's expectation that the bitter lessons learned with regard to the issue of Iraq will contribute throughout the world to strengthening respect for human rights, compliance with international law and the upholding of multilateralism as the cornerstone of the work of the Security Council.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Pakistan.

I would like, first of all, once again to welcome the presence of the Secretary-General at this important meeting.

During and after the Iraq conflict, the welfare and security of the fraternal people of Iraq has remained a fundamental concern for the people and the Government of Pakistan. The Iraqi people have suffered tremendously over the past few decades. Their suffering must now come to an end.

Pakistan sincerely attempted to prevent another conflict in the Gulf. We regretted the outbreak of the conflict. Our position on this resolution has been guided by the objectives of promoting the welfare of the Iraqi people, of promoting peace and stability in the region and of restoring the international rule of law in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Pakistan has supported this resolution for several reasons. First, the resolution specifically upholds the principles of the United Nations Charter as they relate to Iraq. It affirms the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. It stresses the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their own political future and to control their own natural resources. It affirms the imperative of respect for international law, especially the Geneva Conventions and the Hague Regulations.

Secondly, this resolution lifts the sanctions long enforced against the Iraqi people and opens the door to the provision of relief and humanitarian assistance to them, to the revival of the Iraqi economy, to Iraq's reconstruction and to the installation of a representative Government that can be recognized by the international community and that can soon take its place here at the United Nations in the comity of free nations.

Thirdly, this resolution accords an independent and vital role to the United Nations and to the Secretary-General and his Special Representative in the provision of humanitarian relief to the Iraqi people, in the reconstruction of Iraq, in the management of its resources and its economic revival and in facilitating the process of bringing forth a representative Government. Pakistan looks forward to the early appointment of the Secretary-General's Special Representative. We expect that the role of the United Nations and the Secretary-General will become even more central in Iraq in the coming months.

Fourthly, the resolution, especially in the fourteenth and fifteenth preambular paragraphs and in operative paragraph 1, opens the door to the friends of Iraq to contribute to the welfare of the Iraqi people, including to the creation of an environment of peace and security in Iraq.

Pakistan, like several other members of the Security Council, has agreed, due to the exigencies of the circumstances, to the delegation of certain powers by the Security Council to the occupying Powers, represented by the Authority. It is our expectation that the responsibilities entrusted to the Authority under this resolution will be exercised transparently and fairly and, above all, in the interests of the Iraqi people.

We welcome the continuing role that the United Nations will play in the oversight functions. It is necessary, in that context, to recall that under the Charter the powers delegated by the Security Council under this resolution are not open-ended or unqualified.

They should be exercised in ways that conform with "the principles of justice and international law" mentioned in Article 1 of the Charter, and especially in conformity with the Geneva Conventions and the Hague Regulations, besides the Charter itself.

The resolution, as has been noted by the representative of the United Kingdom, is not an omnibus resolution. There are several issues that will have to be addressed by the Security Council in the coming weeks and months. Those include, first, the certification by the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency that Iraq is free of weapons of mass destruction; secondly, the end of the arms embargo against Iraq; thirdly, the clarification and possible enlargement of the United Nations role in the future; fourthly, specific measures for the recovery of Iraq's looted archaeological heritage; and, fifthly, resolution of the problem of Kuwaiti and third-country missing nationals.

Pakistan welcomes the provisions in the resolution relating to regular reporting to the Security Council by the Secretary-General as well as by the United States and the United Kingdom, representing the Authority. It is Pakistan's earnest hope that representative government will soon be restored and that Iraq's sovereignty and political independence will come about as soon as possible. A secure and stable regional environment is imperative for the realization of the fundamental objectives of this resolution. Pakistan continues to hope that there will be parallel progress in resolving the other outstanding conflicts and disputes that bedevil this region.

I now resume my functions as the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, who desires to make a statement.

The Secretary-General: We should all be gratified that the Council has come together to chart the way forward in Iraq. As members know, I have always held that the unity of the Council is the indispensable foundation for effective action to maintain international peace and security and international law.

The Council has adopted a resolution that spells out the assistance it expects the United Nations to give to the people of Iraq in coordination with the occupying Powers, which have the responsibility for the effective administration of the territory. The mandate which the Security Council has given us involves complex and difficult tasks, but we will carry it out to the best of our ability, just as we are already carrying out our vital task of humanitarian relief.

Whatever differences there have been in the recent past, we now have a new basis on which to work, and we must all work very hard, keeping the interests of Iraqis at the forefront of all our efforts. Our most important task will be to ensure that the people of Iraq — men and women alike — are able as soon as possible, through a transparent and impartially managed political process, to form a free and representative Government of their own choice, so that they can regain their national sovereignty and build a stable and prosperous Iraq at peace with its neighbours.

The United Nations will play its full part in this international effort. The Security Council has asked me to name a Special Representative to lead on our side. I will do so without delay. The full support of all members of the Council will be essential and I am confident that my Representative will have that support.

The President: The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.4762

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4762nd meeting

Thursday, 22 May 2003, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Akram	(Pakistan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	Chile	Mr. Maquieira
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Spain	Ms. Menendez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. King
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Response to the humanitarian situation in Iraq.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-36770 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Response to the humanitarian situation in Iraq

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme.

It is so decided.

I invite the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of any objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, Mr. James Morris.

It is so decided.

I invite the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, Mr. James Morris, to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of any objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. David Nabarro, Executive Director of Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments and Senior Policy Adviser to the Director-General of the World Health Organization.

It is so decided.

I invite the Executive Director of Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments and Senior Policy Adviser to the Director-General of the World Health Organization, Mr. David Nabarro, to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of any objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Nils Kastberg, Director of Emergency Programmes of the United Nations Children's Fund.

It is so decided.

I invite the Director of Emergency Programmes of the United Nations Children's Fund, Mr. Nils Kastberg, to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of any objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jakob Kellenberger, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

It is so decided.

I invite the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. Jakob Kellenberger, to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Mr. James Morris, Mr. David Nabarro, Mr. Nils Kastberg and Mr. Jakob Kellenberger.

At the end of those briefings, I will give the floor to Council members who wish to make comments or ask questions.

I wish to inform Council members that, due to the late start of this meeting, it is my intention to adjourn at 1 p.m. and to reconvene at 3 p.m. to continue our consideration of the item. I regret any inconvenience this may cause to any of our participants, including our distinguished guests.

I welcome the presence of the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Louise Fréchette, and I invite her to take the floor.

The Deputy Secretary-General: I would like to begin by expressing our sorrow over the heavy loss of life, injuries and destruction caused by the powerful earthquake that struck Algeria yesterday. We extend our condolences to the families of the deceased and to the Government of Algeria.

The United Nations is prepared to assist in any way it can. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has already provided an emergency cash grant of $50,000. A United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team has been deployed to support the Algerian Government in coordinating the international response and to assist in assessing priority needs. The United Nations has also contacted several Governments, which have put search and rescue teams and relief supplies on standby to support the efforts of the Algerian Government.

Mr. President, I wish to thank you for this opportunity to provide an update on the humanitarian situation in Iraq and the activities of the United Nations on the ground.

Following my remarks, as you have indicated, Sir, my colleagues from the United Nations Development Programme, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund will brief the Council. The Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. Kenzo Oshima, who has just returned from Baghdad, is also with us today. All of them will be pleased to respond to questions.

I would also like to acknowledge the presence of Mr. Jakob Kellenberger, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). He and his colleagues did outstanding work during the conflict in Iraq and will continue to be our close partners in the crucial period ahead.

Let me start by stressing the strong commitment of the United Nations system to fulfilling the humanitarian, reconstruction and other mandates assigned to it in the resolution that the Council has just adopted. The humanitarian situation in Iraq remains very serious. The breakdown of essential services and law and order has resulted in a range of urgent needs. A major humanitarian crisis has been averted so far. But the civilian population, and children in particular, remain at risk, particularly if the security situation does not improve substantially in the near future.

United Nations agencies are at work throughout the country, providing food, water, medicine and other emergency assistance. They have helped repair water and sanitation facilities, assisted in the restoration of electricity and provided relief to internally displaced persons and malnourished children.

I would like to pay special tribute to the courage and commitment of our 3,400 national staff, who continued to deliver essential supplies to hospitals, displaced populations and other vulnerable groups throughout the period of conflict.

The ability of the United Nations to respond rapidly and effectively from the outset of the crisis was greatly enhanced by a range of preparedness measures. Inter-agency coordination resulted in joint planning and an integrated plan. Substantial quantities of humanitarian supplies were prepositioned inside Iraq and in several neighbouring countries. Iraq's neighbours have also been helpful in ensuring the swift transit of supplies through five main access corridors.

Since international staff started returning to Iraq one month ago, we have continued to expand our presence. More than 300 international staff have been deployed, with teams positioned in all five subregions. And, as authorized by the Council, the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission has provided a wide range of support and services to United Nations agencies on their return to the country.

The Humanitarian Coordinator and the Area Coordinators have been holding regular meetings with United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In addition, sectoral coordination groups have been set up in priority areas with the involvement of relevant ministries, other Iraqi authorities, and representatives of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. Coordination with the latter Office in particular, and with military authorities, is crucial for ensuring both an effective humanitarian response and the safety and security of humanitarian staff.

The overarching priority of virtually all our assistance efforts is the reactivation of essential public services. This includes not only health services, electricity and water supply, but also the public distribution system for food, on which much of the population depends for their survival. United Nations agencies are working in full support of the relevant Iraqi national authorities.

One major constraint on public service providers has been the inability to pay salaries and other running costs. One-off payments of $20 have been made in some locations, and we are encouraged by indications that a regular system of salary payments to public sector employees will begin shortly.

The other problem, of course, has been the looting of a large number of essential public facilities. This leads me naturally to the question of security and law and order. The general lack of law and order has had a wide variety of humanitarian consequences. Ministries, water treatment plants, hospitals and warehouses have been devastated. Many facilities were repaired or restocked only to be looted again a few days later. Security concerns also include unexploded ordnance, which threatens the civilian population, particularly children, and impedes transport and a resumption of normal agricultural activities.

The very fear of violence in many areas is making it more difficult, and often impossible, to deliver drugs and other essential supplies, and is preventing people from going to work. We have also had first-hand reports about women who are afraid to go outside, and especially about girls who are afraid to return to school.

Such insecurity is also a major impediment to humanitarian assistance activities. With the movement of our staff limited in many urban areas, they cannot reach people in need. Personnel of several NGOs have been attacked in cities and on the main roads to Baghdad.

The threat of violence has also resulted in population movements, such as the displacement of Iraqi Arabs from several areas. Such displacements highlight, yet again, the vulnerability of civilians in conflict and post-conflict environments to human rights violations and other threats. United Nations agencies, under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator, and working with the ICRC and NGOs, have drawn up a protection framework for internally displaced persons, returning refugees and other civilians at risk.

Finally, I would like to say a word about Iraq's cultural heritage. The destruction and looting that occurred in Baghdad and at archaeological sites, historic buildings, monuments and museums around the country was a tragedy. International experts working under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization have just visited Baghdad and are now finalizing their report. We are all strongly committed to working with Iraqis and all others concerned to protect and rehabilitate the country's cultural heritage and to fight the illicit traffic in cultural property.

Our ability to respond to the urgent needs I have outlined depends greatly on whether the necessary resources will be available. To date, more than $700 million has been received in response to our flash appeal, and I would like to thank donors for their generosity.

Moreover, as implementation of Security Council resolution 1472 (2003) continues, the Office of the Iraq Programme and United Nations agencies have confirmed that nearly $1 billion worth of priority humanitarian supplies can be shipped by 3 June. As a result of the resolution that the Council has adopted today, additional priority supplies will be made available to the Iraqi people.

At the same time, there remain significant gaps in funding for key priorities such as the re-establishment of the health system, nutrition programmes, water facilities and restoring the education system.

As United Nations agencies continue to expand their presence in Iraq, they are conducting comprehensive assessments that will enable us to re-prioritize our response plans. Based on these new assessments, we will be launching a revised humanitarian appeal in the second half of June.

In conclusion, let me stress that the United Nations and its agencies, funds and programmes are committed to doing their utmost to help the people of Iraq in their time of need.

The President: I now give the floor to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, Mr. Mark Malloch Brown.

Mr. Malloch Brown: Mr. President, thank you for the invitation to address the Council today. If I may, I will divide my brief remarks into two: first, a description of what the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is doing in partnership with the other agencies represented here today in the humanitarian area, and then a word about our thoughts on reconstruction planning, an area of activity that we can perhaps now move into more fully after the happy passage this morning of the Security Council resolution 1483 (2003).

First, with respect to the humanitarian area, we are working very closely with all the agencies here, as well as with non-governmental organizations. Let me salute, as the Deputy Secretary-General did, our friends and colleagues in the International Committee of the

Red Cross for their heroic effort throughout the conflict. I also salute my colleagues in the World Food Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) for their extraordinary activities in recent weeks.

We, too, have UNDP teams deployed in Baghdad, Basra and the three northern governorates. We are now deploying staff to Mosul and Kirkuk. Therefore, at the moment we are running a rather decentralized operation. In fact, we have the most difficulty in our Baghdad operation, where looting and heavy damage to our offices have required us to invest deeply and quickly in restoring our operational capacities there.

In Iraq, unlike in the rest of the world, the UNDP happens to be deeply involved in the electricity sector, having carried out, under the oil for food programme, responsibilities in building the electricity grid in northern Iraq. That has allowed us to move that capacity quickly to other parts of the country to attempt to restore critical emergency electricity supplies, in particular to allow water plants, sewage treatment plants, hospitals and other medical facilities to resume operations. We work closely with UNICEF and WHO in this. We have dispatched assessment missions to key locations to try to see what we can do to help restore generation and distribution facilities in the north, south and centre of the country. We very much want to thank the United Kingdom for the financial support that makes this emergency electricity work possible.

We are also involved in dredging the port of Umm Qasr, where, through the support of the Government of Japan, we have put in place an emergency dredging project to support the World Food Programme's capacity to deliver food shipments. The actual dredging works will start on 26 May and allow over a four week period the dredging of that part of the port that is receiving food aid and other humanitarian assistance. That will allow vessels of up to 50,000 tons to offload, which is currently not possible.

Let me also say that activities in each of these areas have been accelerated by access to contracts under the oil for food programme, which has given us both extra support in the dredging area and key components for electricity and other sectors.

We have also started work on emergency employment generation, imitating a very successful project we have had in Afghanistan for quick employment generation after conflict. A component of that programme is just getting under way in Baghdad, again with the support of the Government of Japan. That support was announced just yesterday. We also have activities in mine action and other areas. I would like to thank again those Governments that have come forward to support those activities.

Let me now, if I may, just say a word about reconstruction and recovery planning. As so many of you in the Council informally urged me, I sought to make sure through the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) that we as a system would be ready when the mandate came to move beyond humanitarian assistance to reconstruction and recovery planning. We have been deeply engaged with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on planning needs assessment activities, bringing both those two organizations up to speed in terms of providing them with detailed economic, financial and project data to shortcut their own planning and preparation processes. We have been discussing with them, as well as through the UNDG and all of our fellow agencies, how we could quickly mount needs assessment activities for reconstruction in the field once that became possible.

As well, with the Government of Norway, we are preparing for a major assessment of current living standards, a nationwide data collection activity and household survey to identify more clearly the reconstruction needs of Iraqis throughout the country.

I just want to assure the Council that the humanitarian operation, as you will hear from others, is well and truly under way and that, as we have always made clear, it was in no way contingent on a resolution such as the one passed this morning. But now that this morning's resolution is in place, I, through the UNDG and under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General, plan to move quickly to put in place the planning and needs assessment process for reconstruction.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme.

Mr. Morris: On 11 May, I travelled to Baghdad to review first-hand the progress of the operations of the World Food Programme (WFP) in Iraq and to hold meetings with senior members of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Affairs, the Ministry of Trade, which is overseeing the Iraqi food distribution system, and United Nations colleagues. I

am pleased to report to the Council that tremendous progress has been made. The WFP has already delivered more than 200,000 metric tonnes of food — 3,800 truckloads — using five different logistics corridors through Turkey, Jordan, Syria, Iran and Kuwait. In addition, a shipment of WFP rice has moved through the port of Umm Qasr. And once the dredging by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other work is completed, that port will become a major entry point for the World Food Programme.

All those deliveries are gearing up to WFP's largest humanitarian operation ever. Our objective is to ensure that 480,000 metric tonnes of food a month are available to feed all 27 million Iraqis through their existing public food distribution system for a period of five months. At the conclusion of that five-month period, we plan that an Iraqi authority will be able to take over. During this operation, we will distribute 2.5 million tonnes of food — that is 48,000 truckloads — at a total cost of $1.85 billion.

Resources for this operation so far have come both from the donor community — in fact, we have received support from more than 30 countries — and from food supplies available under the oil for food programme. WFP staff have been working hard to renegotiate food contracts under the provisions of Security Council resolutions 1472 (2003) and 1476 (2003). I am pleased to inform the Council that we have now identified a total of $947 million worth of food items from the oil for food programme, including their transport and distribution costs, which will be used towards this emergency operation. With those resources and existing in-country stocks, distributions have already begun to hospitals, social institutions and those who had not received their complete advance rations earlier. Full distributions to the entire population will commence on 1 June through the 44,000 food agents placed all across Iraq. Advanced rations provided by the Government before the conflict supplied families with two months of provisions, and with the restoration of the public distribution system we are confident we can avoid any serious hunger among Iraqis. Today, there is no food crisis in Iraq.

That being said, we still face a number of immediate challenges. First and foremost is the issue of security for staff, warehouses, silos, mills and offices. I raised this issue in Baghdad and was pleased to hear that it is considered to be the absolute, number-one top priority. Other pressing issues include the payment of salaries for Ministry of Trade staff implementing the public distribution system, as well as the provision of water, fuel and electricity supplies to mills in Iraq so they can produce wheat flour.

Another pressing concern is the protection of Iraq's cereal harvest, estimated this year at some 1.7 million tonnes of wheat and barley. The harvest began last week and will continue into June. The Iraqi Ministry of Trade has traditionally purchased the local crop through a network of Grain Board buying centres spread throughout the production areas. In previous years, farmers have been offered a fixed price of some $75 per tonne of wheat, taking into consideration that they have also received subsidized seeds, fertilizers and pesticides from the Government. By way of comparison, the cost of importing wheat into Iraq is over $200 per tonne.

The World Food Programme has set aside funds from the 13 per cent account and is further developing a project proposal to procure some 1 million tonnes of wheat locally in Iraq using United Nations escrow account funds, as provided for under resolution 1472 (2003). We will, in fact, pay the local farmers $105 per tonne. For this project to be successful, we need the immediate re-establishment of the administration of the Grain Board. This will require payment of salaries and replacement of looted weight scales, bagging equipment and office equipment, as well as security and currency arrangements for large-scale cash disbursements, given the absence of banking facilities.

WFP has supported the procurement and delivery of food commodities for public distribution during this time of upheaval in Iraq, and we look forward to handing over these responsibilities as a new administration comes online. The importance of the food ration provided under this system cannot be overstated during this time of transition. The entire population of Iraq depends on the rations to some degree, and 60 per cent of Iraqis who are dependent on the rations as their sole source of income sell part of them to pay for other household needs. As such, until there is political stability and broad economic recovery which benefits all sections of Iraqi society, the food rations will continue to provide basic household food security and act as a stabilizing force in this volatile period.

At the same time, Iraq is a nation of tremendous potential wealth and resources. With the restoration of a functioning economy, it will eventually be able to make the transition from heavily subsidized food rations towards a market food economy. As it does so, it will be critical to maintain a safety net for the vulnerable and food insecure, especially young children, in areas where we have seen unusually high malnutrition rates. The population requiring a safety net would at the outset be very large. However, it would shrink over time as more and more economic opportunities became available. The World Food Programme has developed considerable expertise in supporting the development of a safety-net system. Should it be called upon to do so, the World Food Programme stands ready to provide its expertise and capacity in this area to assist the Iraqi people.

The President: I thank the Executive Director of the World Food Programme for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. David Nabarro, Executive Director of Sustainable Development and Health Environments and Senior Policy Adviser to the Director General of the World Health Organization.

Mr. Nabarro: I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and other Council members, for giving me the opportunity to be here. I bring greetings from Gro Harlem Brundtland, the Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), who is unable to be here because she is presiding over our annual assembly, which is currently under way.

I am going to present a short version of a longer statement which I hope will be accessible to Council members, prepared for this occasion by the World Health Organization's teams in Iraq and surrounding countries.

When the World Health Organization assessed the health situation of the people in Iraq at the beginning of this year, we concluded that they faced the mix of health hazards that are generally associated with longstanding deprivation. Children, women, the elderly and disabled people, and the 5 per cent of the population with chronic illness — heart and kidney disease, cancer and diabetes — were especially vulnerable. Such people accounted for about 20 million out of the total population of 25 million.

Those people were heavily dependent on the functioning health services that were provided by more than 1,400 medical facilities, of which 160 were hospitals and 1,200 were health centres, and by several thousand doctors. Through the oil for food programme, systems for the procurement, distribution and availability of medical supplies were in place and were funded, and health services were well used.

But daily reports to the World Health Organization's headquarters from many parts of Iraq now give cause for concern, particularly as this is an important time of transition for that country. As has been said by others, in terms of risks to people, property and movement, the security situation hampers access to and provision of all basic services — water, sanitation and electricity, and, of course, medical and public health.

But even in situations that are secure, the power vacuum means that Government workers in hospitals and health centres who really want to work do not know who should direct them. They do not know what is expected of them; they do not know whether they have any likelihood of long-term employment. Indeed, in some places we have the problem of hospitals being taken over by neighbourhood groups and not really functioning in the way that they are designed to do.

The absolute lack of cash to meet the running costs of services — particularly food for patients, cleaning services, refuse disposal from the hospitals, and to enable staff to receive the remuneration they need — undermines the capacity of all institutions to offer essential health care to people who need it. As a result, therefore, Iraqis are unable to access the health care services that they need for the treatment of chronic conditions, as well as acute needs. Services, in our judgement, are running at between 20 per cent and 40 per cent of their pre-war capacity. Public health systems are not working as they should, and the threat of cholera, tuberculosis, malaria, leishmaniasis, measles and, now, whooping cough, is always there.

For some weeks now we have made strenuous efforts to catalyse a restarting of the health services. We have been working through WHO national staff in Iraq, who continued operating throughout the war. We have also been working in close cooperation with our colleagues in the International Committee of the Red Cross, to whom I would like to pay tribute again today, as well as many other non-governmental organizations and other parts of the United Nations system, especially the United Nations Children's Fund.

We have worked in support of national authorities in Baghdad and in the governorates. We have really quite a complicated and decentralized operation. We have given priority to restarting essential hospital services, disease surveillance, medicine distribution systems and the capacity to run the services within individual governorates. Together with national counterparts, we have been working out what funds are needed for staff supplies and basic utilities, looking at a six-month period of transition. We have been finding ways to move these monies to the hospitals and to ensure that the funds are properly used. We have joined together the emerging mechanisms for coordinating actors for health in different parts of the country so that all the different contributions that the actors are making are well used and can build on national capacities, whether in the south, in Baghdad, in the centre or in the north.

We have made an effort to match available supplies to needs, identifying 115 oil for food contracts at a value of $130 million, speeding them up so that they are delivered where they are needed, and adding another 30 additional contracts for essential goods under resolutions 1472 (2003) and 1476 (2003), so that we can bridge the gap until new systems are established.

There will be a need for funds to get essential services back even to their pre-war level. An amount of about $20 million a month is needed to get them in place. Although we have received some very generous contributions for health in Iraq from some of the countries that have already been mentioned, it is not enough. Frankly, it is much less than what will be needed for the eventual budget for a functioning health service in Iraq.

We hope that, as the new Development Fund and systems that have been agreed upon this morning are put in place, a proportion of those funds can be made available for the essential running costs of basic services during the transition, and that that can be done in a way that does not unduly drain the available international funds for the huge number of health crises already under way in other parts of the world. Of course, in the long term we expect that the country of Iraq will be able to afford a good-quality, equitable health service without external assistance.

We now look forward to moving ahead — working with the new authorities and coordinating the various actors who are involved in health care on the ground — to restart health services in all governorates so that the people of Iraq can access the medical care and public health they not only need, but also deserve.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Nils Kastberg, Director of Emergency Programmes of the United Nations Children's Fund.

Mr. Kastberg: My full statement, as well as a brief on our work, will be available to members. I will therefore not go through the full, detailed statement.

Let me thank you, Mr. President, for inviting the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to participate in this meeting. I apologize on behalf of Ms. Carol Bellamy, our Executive Director, who happens, Sir, to be in your country today and who has visited various parts of Iraq in the last four days. She has sent us her observations, about which I will speak.

As many of my United Nations colleagues present here have done, let me start by mentioning the high priority we place upon the need for law and order throughout Iraq. The ability of United Nations staff to be able to reach those most in need is still severely compromised by the development of a culture of lawlessness and fear and its impact on children, especially girls. We see this issue as overriding in its impact. I will make some comments in that regard later in my statement.

Under the overall coordination of the United Nations, getting all children back in school as soon as possible is a paramount priority for us. Eighty per cent of Iraq's 8,500 primary school facilities have re-opened. We have delivered hundreds of school-in-a-box kits, as we call them. We are committed to delivering enough kits to supply all 3.5 million primary-school-age children with learning supplies by September.

We must nevertheless be vigilant. In the south and centre of the country school attendance rates remain well below the already low pre-war average of 75 per cent. Many people are reluctant to send their children, especially girls, to school through potentially dangerous situations.

Another aspect that we would like to highlight relates to the situation of women. Iraqi women lost a lot of ground under the sanctions in terms of their participation in social, economic and political life. A reborn Iraq will be one in which Iraqi women must

drive the reconstruction process. It would be a great disservice to Iraq if its women were to be kept in their homes out of fear.

Restarting education empowers communities, makes an immediate difference in the lives of children and parents and builds a civil society. It is for that reason that we would like to advocate for having children return to school as quickly as possible.

Another high priority is to provide basic health care for children and women, in which we collaborate with our colleagues around this table — including with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Committee of the Red Cross — and with many non-governmental organizations.

Last week, a rapid nutritional assessment carried out by UNICEF local staff in Baghdad found that acute malnutrition had nearly doubled, from 4 per cent one year ago to almost 8 per cent today. We are not surprised. Wasting in children is related not only to how much they have to eat, but also to their bodies' ability to retain what is eaten. When not properly treated, diarrhoea leads to the loss of nutrients in the body, to dehydration and, all too often, to death. Doctors in Baghdad and in the north of the country told Ms. Bellamy this week that some 90 per cent of the children being brought to hospitals are now suffering from this affliction.

We therefore currently need decent water and sanitation throughout Iraq. We are involved in that effort. We are currently providing 2 million litres of water per day by tanker trucks to the south of the country. We are establishing generating plants and pumping equipment in many areas, as well as supplying hospitals and other institutions with water.

We also need certain policy decisions to be taken. If taken soon, such decisions could yield quick and positive results. One example of that pertains to infant feeding. Breast-milk substitutes, which were included by the former Government of Iraq in the oil-for-food basket, are actually killing children when mixed with contaminated water. We believe that food supplies for children must continue. However, we strongly urge that breast-milk substitutes be dropped. They should be available on the market and for doctors to prescribe as needed, but they should not be promoted for inclusion in the food basket. We are giving high priority to working with our WHO and other partners to promote breastfeeding as the optimal solution to protect the health of children.

Also in the area of health, we have launched a national campaign to prevent measles. We have also begun to provide therapeutic feeding in various places, which we believe is making a difference.

The worrying condition of Iraq's children indicates that addressing child malnutrition in a comprehensive manner that includes water and sanitation requires particular attention in the recovery effort.

The protection of civilians and the protection of women against violence are also high on our agenda. We seek to protect children from abuse and exploitation, including sexual exploitation. We know that many children have been brought into armed gangs or have joined groups of street children and are using drugs. As the Deputy Secretary-General mentioned, we also know that children are being hurt and killed by landmines. In Baghdad alone there are about 800 hazardous sites, the majority related to cluster bombs and caches of dumped ammunition.

We are committed to supporting the reconstruction effort by supporting efforts to protect vulnerable children in Iraq in areas such as juvenile justice, community rehabilitation and mine awareness and removal, as well as in providing direct protection, as is the case with the Palestinian children who have been driven out of their homes who are being assisted in the outskirts of Baghdad.

These are some of the priorities that we believe are extremely important for Iraq's children: law and order; a return to a positive learning environment; basic water, sanitation, health services and nutrition care; and the protection of vulnerable children. We are already heavily engaged in that effort with committed staff. We believe we can work with communities in Iraq, in which the Iraqi people themselves form a cadre of educated, well trained, competent and committed people. We believe that Iraqis from all ethnic, linguistic, political and geographical backgrounds can be unified by making the well-being of children a national priority.

So powerful is the pull of supporting and helping children that, immediately after the war, when the looting and burning of Baghdad was at its height, UNICEF's national staff dug into their own pockets

and pulled together $95,000 to keep our office and programme running. In fact, it was for only three days that our office did not operate. Allow me to suggest, on behalf of Ms. Bellamy, that the world follow their example and commit to improving the immediate and long-term future of Iraq by investing in its children.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Jakob Kellenberger, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr. Kellenberger: I thank you, Sir, for the invitation to share with Council members how the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been responding to the humanitarian situation in Iraq.

I should like to start by highlighting two factors which played a defining role in shaping ICRC's response to the recent conflict in Iraq. The first is that ICRC has been active in Iraq without interruption since 1980, with bases in Baghdad, Basra and the North, where it has pursued both protection and assistance activities. Concretely, protection work has meant visits to and repatriation of prisoners of war from the Iraq-Iran conflict, as well as the search for information on people unaccounted for from the 1990-1991 Gulf War. In terms of assistance, it is particularly relevant to note that support for medical structures, hospitals and health-care centres alike, has been at the forefront of our priorities for the past four years. The same applies to water and sanitation projects. ICRC was therefore pretty familiar with the country's health and water adduction and processing systems well before 20 March this year.

Secondly, in October last year, our institution decided to increase its response capabilities in and around Iraq. The decision of principle was also taken to keep core teams of expatriate staff inside Iraq in the event of a war. Moreover, a careful review process has led us to the conclusion that, regardless of military developments, deficiencies in the health-care delivery and water adduction systems were likely to be issues of critical concern to the civilian population. In addition, it was evident that the outbreak of a full-fledged conflict would require ICRC to step up its protection work, notably by visiting prisoners of war and civilian internees. In other words, we concluded that the existing operational priorities were likely to keep, if not increase, their relevance. The course of events validated our choices.

During the war, ICRC supported hospitals and health centres and effected emergency repairs on the water supply systems. As regards protection, ICRC delegates have so far visited over 7,000 prisoners of war and civilian internees. Over 6,000 have been released in the meantime. Efforts to gain access to all other interned persons are ongoing.

There were also limits, both security- and staff-related, to the activities carried out by ICRC during the most intense phase of fighting. Whereas ICRC could carry out emergency work in Baghdad, the Basra region and the North during the most intense phase of fighting, it had no access to major cities between Basra and Baghdad, such as Nasiriyah, Karbala and Najaf.

I would now like to say a few words about our present and future priorities in Iraq. These priorities will include, as may be expected from ICRC, visits to all persons deprived of their liberty; the protection of vulnerable groups, such as separated and unaccompanied children, the sick and wounded, internally displaced persons and minority groups; the re-establishment of family links; the prevention and resolution of issues of persons unaccounted for in relation to the present and past conflicts and violence; emergency repair and rehabilitation of vital structures, such as water, health and sewage facilities; the provision of medical emergency consumables and equipment; assistance to and support for public health structures; emergency food and non-food assistance to vulnerable populations; and awareness-raising activities related to explosive remnants of war and landmines. ICRC is presently fielding nearly 100 international and 450 Iraqi staff to implement this programme.

ICRC, as lead agency of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Iraq, is also coordinating the activities of the national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies in that country. Representatives of 33 different societies and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies met on the premises of the ICRC delegation in Baghdad just 10 days ago.

When it comes to assessing the current humanitarian situation, it is essential to understand that it cannot be dissociated from the security context or from the current dysfunction of key administrative structures. ICRC drew the attention of the coalition and of the international community to this fact at an early

stage — for example, in a public appeal I made on 11 April. Improving security and establishing functioning administrative structures so that people can go back to work and get paid remain top priorities. In fact, when I visited Baghdad in early May, that was my main message. ICRC remains concerned by the security situation in Baghdad and other parts of the country. Various incidents in recent days further show that main roads remain unsafe.

An early analysis, based on our field experience, that Iraq was not faced with a general humanitarian catastrophe seems now to be widely shared. However, three considerations should be borne in mind. First, things could still go wrong if security is not improved. More has to be done. Secondly, there are urgent humanitarian needs in specific sectors. Thirdly, beyond humanitarian emergencies, there are immense needs for repair and upgrades of infrastructures, in particular in the health and water sectors.

If there is, in our assessment, no major lack of dry food at present, people are lacking fresh food, not so much because of a lack of supply, but because of a lack of money to buy. It is good news to hear that the payment of salaries or other financial incentives has now started in various places. We also understand that the lack of fuel in some parts of the country sometimes makes difficult the transportation of staff from different institutions or can reduce supply lines.

A systematic evaluation of needs by ICRC medical teams in hospitals and other medical structures across the country is under way. In the course of the week of 11-18 May alone, ICRC medical teams visited about 10 hospitals in Baghdad and seven in the central region of the country. The situation in hospitals does vary widely from one place to the other. There is a clear need for medical supplies in order to treat specific diseases, such as cancer, diabetes or cardiovascular diseases. In order to fill the gap until the central drug-supply system is functioning again, ICRC has just placed a large order for pharmaceuticals to be distributed through the central pharmacy and monitored by ICRC.

One of our main humanitarian concerns relates to the high number of accidents caused by unexploded ordnance and mines and to the potentially disastrous effects of the many weapons and large amounts of ammunition that are easily accessible across the country. In order to disseminate emergency information and to evaluate the situation, an ICRC team recently visited 10 of the country's governorates.

As far as the legal framework is concerned, we are, in terms of international humanitarian law — as has been said before — in a situation of occupation. The applicability of the relevant provisions of the Geneva Conventions, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention, and of the Hague Regulation is accepted by the occupying Power. Monitoring the application of these provisions will be one of the tasks of the ICRC.

I thank the Deputy Secretary-General and other colleagues from the United Nations system for their kind words with regard to our institution, and it will be my great pleasure to convey them to our staff.

We are looking forward to cooperating closely with the humanitarian agencies of the United Nations system and with other humanitarian actors while — and the Council is well aware of this — maintaining our full independence with regard to all actors.

The ICRC will strictly respect the principles of independence, neutrality and impartiality in Iraq, as in all other operational contexts. If our organization has been able to conduct its activities for the past 23 years in Iraq, for the past 24 years in Afghanistan, and in many other places, it is because the institution is perceived as neutral, impartial and independent and therefore accepted by the local population and the different groups. Present and active in Iraq for 23 years, the ICRC will continue to assist the Iraqi population, in full respect of its dignity.

The President: I thank the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. Kellenberger, for his statement.

I will now open the floor to those Council members wishing to ask questions or to make comments.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to express to you our appreciation for convening this meeting. Our particular appreciation goes also to the Deputy Secretary-General and to Mr. Malloch Brown, Mr. Morris, Mr. Nabarro, Mr. Kastberg and Mr. Kellenberger. We listened very attentively to their briefings, and I should like to reiterate to them all that we share their concerns. We strongly support them in their efforts.

Before I continue, I should like to reiterate the condolences expressed by Ms. Fréchette to the brotherly people of Algeria, who are facing a veritable catastrophe as a result of the earthquake. I should like also to thank the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General for their prompt actions in dealing with that disaster — as if the Arab region did not already have enough disasters to deal with.

The Syrian Arab Republic has made every effort to cooperate with the United Nations agencies represented here today in order to address the severe humanitarian crisis affecting the people of Iraq. We have acceded to all the requests they made. In particular, as I said earlier, we share their grave concern vis-à-vis the lack of security and of law and order in that country. We believe that it is necessary to make every effort to deal with those issues, because, failing that, it will be impossible to achieve the other objectives set, as was eloquently pointed by the representatives of the specialized agencies and the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

As is well known, the Syrian Arab Republic has sent a great deal of humanitarian relief supplies, including medicine and foodstuffs, to the Iraqi people through the specialized agencies. We are confident that the contributions made by the people of Syria to their Iraqi brethren will increase in the coming days.

Among the things that have greatly impressed us as Arabs has been seeing Ms. Carol Bellamy, the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), living with the people of Iraq and the children of Iraq in the difficult circumstances they face. We are confident that these efforts, supported by the United Nations specialized agencies and humanitarian agencies worldwide, will lead to the alleviation of the plight of that people. We pay tribute to Ms. Bellamy and to all the other specialized agencies that have effectively contributed to the alleviation of the suffering of the Iraqi people.

In this meeting we have among us the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and we would like to make reference to the tragic situation of the Kuwaiti prisoners of war and missing persons. We must not forget them, given the fact that the news we have received through the media is a cause for grave concern. We reaffirm anew that there is a need to follow up on this humanitarian question with all the attention it deserves.

I have two brief questions for Mr. Nabarro and Mr. Kastberg. Of course, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization (WHO) are directly supervising the supply of medical and foodstuffs to Iraq under resolution 1472 (2003). What is their assessment of what has been delivered to Iraq to date? What are the bases for the choice of foodstuffs and medical supplies, and what priority is being given to their delivery to Iraq? We would like to know that in order to be able to increase the contributions we can make or that we can encourage through our membership in the Council.

I have a question for Mr. Kastberg about the rate of enrolment of students in elementary and secondary schools. The looting that took place in Iraq has led to veritable disasters in that aspect, in particular in the elementary and secondary schools and in the universities, which were thoroughly looted. What percentage of students have gone back to school, and what is required of the international community and of the oil for food programme to meet the basic requirements for restoring the educational system to an acceptable level — a level that would ensure that future Iraqi generations will not lose a whole school year as a result of these developments?

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): First, I would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Malloch Brown, Mr. Morris, Mr. Nabarro, Mr. Kastberg and Mr. Kellenberger for their briefings. I would like to make a few comments and pose a few questions.

I think that the presentations we heard this morning make it clear that we are faced with a serious situation. Although the Deputy Secretary-General has assured us that at present there is no humanitarian catastrophe, we feel that the situation indeed gives rise to major concern. As we heard from the representatives of the specialized agencies and programmes, in many important areas — such as food supply, potable water, sanitation, electricity and the health system — effective assistance programmes will have to be developed or implemented in order to prevent a dramatic deterioration of the humanitarian and social and, in the end, the political situation on the ground.

We believe that these tasks have to be tackled without further delay and that the prerequisites for immediate action have to be created. First of all, a

minimum level of security is needed. There is no security so far. We are facing serious looting and other criminal activity. Arms are freely available on virtually every street corner. This situation not only prevents any normal economic activity from developing; it is also a serious impediment to humanitarian assistance, whether through the United Nations or through non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

These acts have to be stopped immediately. If sewage plants have to be protected, we have to protect them. If hospitals are in danger of being looted, we have to make them safe. This is a very important part of the responsibilities of the occupying Powers.

We hear news that some hospitals experienced less looting than others because they were protected by Shiah or Sunni militia. This may create a wrong perception in the Iraqi population that the only way to get security is to rely on and to follow Islamic religious groups. In this context, I would be interested in hearing from the United Nations specialized agencies as to whether they share this concern.

On the issue of security, we cannot expect a great deal of patience from the Iraqi population to let things gradually settle. They have not experienced democracy or the rule of law. They do not know how strong a country governed by the people's will can be. What they see is that the new Power in the country is so far not able to establish public order and security. The initial frustration is already tangible, and if we let radical elements in Iraqi society gain social or political influence, there is a real danger that the Iraqis will turn their backs on the very values that we are trying to promote.

Taking these aspects into account, I would like to ask the representatives of the specialized agencies what they believe to be the motives of the ongoing criminal activity. Is it motivated just by greed, or are we facing acts with a political, or even terrorist, background? In our view, it is obvious that it is necessary to better address the security issue and to curb criminal activities in Iraq. I wonder if the specialized agencies or the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), being on the ground, have any practical advice in this area?

I would also like to reiterate a question that I asked at the last briefing on humanitarian matters in Iraq which pertains to the problems of access to Iraq for certain NGOs. Is the access problem no longer an issue?

I also have a question on cooperation with Iraqi institutions. Could the ICRC and any of the agencies present inform us of their cooperation with Iraqi administrative offices or with the private sector?

According to the Security Council resolution adopted today, a Special Representative of the Secretary-General will be sent to Iraq. One of his major tasks will be the coordination of all humanitarian and reconstruction efforts. What would the humanitarian organizations and agencies expect from this new Special Representative? I think this would also be important for the Deputy Secretary-General to know.

And, finally, I have a question on funding. It is directed to all agencies and NGOs that work on the basis of donations raised by the United Nations flash appeals. We just heard from the Deputy Secretary-General that the flash appeal has brought together, I think, $700 million, and many countries have made donations for humanitarian assistance in Iraq. My country, for instance, has participated with 50 million euros, which equals about $58 million. But, as we heard this morning, the flash appeal is still far from succeeding completely. Now the question is: if no flash money is coming in, can the agencies cope with substantially less funds if they want to reach the goals they outlined this morning?

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her very useful briefing. I would also like to thank the representatives of the United Nations agencies and programmes, which are doing outstanding work in Iraq. I welcome here at the Council table the President of the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), Mr. Jakob Kellenberger.

I would like to support what Ms. Frechette talked about — that is, the heroic work being done by the ICRC in Iraq. This is proof of the importance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in situations such as that of Iraq. My delegation welcomes the fact that the resolution on Iraq just adopted this morning talks about NGOs. This is an excellent thing. Bulgaria, as you know, Sir, is dedicated to close cooperation between the United Nations and NGOs, especially in the humanitarian sphere, where they are often doing irreplaceable work.

It is clear from what we have just heard that the main problem confronting the United Nations and NGOs is to help the Iraqi people and the problem of security. The restoration of security is the best way to help these organizations, and I think that the resolution adopted this morning enables us to make substantial progress in this area.

Bulgaria would like to thank the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Mr. Ramiro Lopez da Silva. We think he is doing excellent work to improve the quality of the international assistance reaching the Iraqi population.

I would like to make three observations that stem from the experience of some Governments, including that of Bulgaria, and NGOs with respect to the situation in Iraq.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General — who will be appointed soon, let us hope — will need to ensure that the organizations concerned assist potential donors to identify existing needs as quickly as possible and to advise on the means for providing that assistance and on the places where it is most necessary. We think that it is very important to reduce delays in the exchange of information with potential donors.

The second point is that it is clearly important to avoid overlaps in existing structures for the distribution of humanitarian assistance in the areas of transportation and storage, in order to reduce costs to donors and to maximize the amount of available assistance.

The final important point: we fully understand the importance that most organizations present here attach to cash assistance. But assistance in kind is often more readily available. Over time, we have to find a way to benefit from that type of assistance, which might be available more readily and in larger quantities.

In conclusion, I would like to inform the Council that in the days to come, a convoy of humanitarian assistance for a Mosul hospital organized by Bulgarian non-governmental organizations and encouraged and aided by the Government of Bulgaria, will set out for Iraq. It consists mainly of medicine and equipment. It is being organized primarily by the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian Red Cross, as well as by the Association of Iraqis in Bulgaria. It is a campaign whose scope will expand in the weeks and months to come.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): My delegation expresses its empathy on the occasion of the suffering of the Algerian people, who have recently been so sorely afflicted.

My delegation welcomes the presence at this meeting of the Deputy Secretary-General, who in April 2003 and at the start of this month provided us with information on this subject. We are grateful to her for her important contribution.

My delegation is also grateful to the World Food Programme, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) for the considerable amount of information that they have just provided on the humanitarian situation in Iraq. We thank them most sincerely for their valuable contribution to the only battle worth fighting: the battle for humankind, for real individuals, the battle for the development and the dignity of humankind. The mere presence of those programmes in conflict areas and in areas emerging from conflict sends a message of hope that life has not been abducted but remains.

In particular, Cameroon welcomes the participation at this meeting of the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). His presence is an opportunity to express our appreciation for the outstanding work on the ground since the first day of conflict.

The coalition's military campaign has put an end to a regime whose tyrannical nature has been recognized and censured by all. However, the problems of the martyred Iraqi people are far from being resolved. In the immediate future, restoring security and essential services is a major challenge and a categorical necessity to which we must all respond.

The breakdown of basic services has created a vicious circle that we must quickly break in order to avoid further risk to the humanitarian situation. The link between sanitation, water and health and the link between food, education and health are, of course, evident. Yet, we cannot distinguish between cause and effect in either sector. We believe that the situation reveals what we could call a circular, cumulative causality.

In short, the humanitarian situation in Iraq at present is complex and far-reaching. We have just heard on this question the WHO and the other four major United Nations agencies involved in the implementation of resolution 1472 (2003). In general, considerable progress has been achieved. Certainly, a number of difficulties remain. But thanks to the efforts, the solidarity and the sense of humanity of all, we can hope that the much feared humanitarian catastrophe will not occur.

Following the representatives of the United Nations agencies, I would like to refer to some of the problems discussed.

With respect to insecurity, in particular insecurity on Iraqi roadways, I fear that this may seriously affect food distribution and sanitation services in certain regions, especially in rural areas. In that connection, my delegation would like to have further details on the organization of the distribution of food, medicine and vaccinations in outlying areas. We would also like to know about the nature of the relationship United Nations agencies and humanitarian organizations have with tribal leaders in order to best achieve this objective.

With respect to education, we are concerned to note that the school year may have been lost in some regions. Would it not be possible, while conditions are being established to allow for the gradual return to school of children, including young girls, to extend the school year by six to eight weeks? Clearly, the return of children to school will depend upon security, as well as on transport conditions, which in turn will depend upon the provision of fuel.

Before this meeting, the Red Cross had repeatedly referred to, inter alia, the catastrophic situation of the hospitals, which had been vandalized and which lacked water and electricity. We had also noted the serious management problems, such as the lack of leadership in those hospitals, which had resulted in poor strategic planning, coordination and stock management. Could the World Health Organization provide us with more information on that issue?

We have often said that humanitarian, economic and political issues are closely linked. That is especially true in Iraq. Clearly, the close involvement of the Iraqi people in the provision of humanitarian assistance to their country will be the key to the success of that operation. Such involvement should occur in the distribution and, above all, the provision of goods and services. In that regard, it is essential to speed up the process of ensuring that services are provided by Iraqis. That should assist the economic recovery and reduce humanitarian dependence.

In that regard, my delegation believes that the rapid implementation of micro-credit mechanisms could enable women in particular to start up small, simple projects. The men and women of Iraq are well known for their outstanding personal qualities, and we hope that the United Nations agencies and humanitarian organizations will help them to regain confidence and to take charge of their own lives. Buying Iraqi products and employing Iraqi people will make that possible.

We have just adopted a new resolution on Iraq that extends for a six-month period the oil-for-food programme, for which the four agencies represented here are the primary partners in the field. We would like to know if those agencies believe that in the coming six months they will be able to carry out the contracts for which they are responsible. How do they see the follow-up? How, for example, does the United Nations Development Programme intend to pursue the project to dredging the port of Um Qasr over the next six months?

The era of Saddam is over. We are all anxious to see how — once basic survival requirements have been met — the Iraqis will take charge of their lives and rebuild their country. Earlier today, after the adoption of resolution 1483 (2003), we said that the international community would be by their side, to support them, not to replace them. We also said that this will require all the external actors — the coalition, the United Nations, Member States and non-governmental organizations — to coordinate their activities, work together and develop cooperative relations, while avoiding inevitably counterproductive competition.

The President: A number of speakers remain on my list. Eleven Council members have yet to speak, after which I hope that we will be able to have the benefit of the responses of our other participants.

I will suspend the meeting now, and we will resume promptly at 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.20 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4762 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4762nd meeting

Thursday, 22 May 2003, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Akram	(Pakistan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	Chile	Mr. Maquieira
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. King
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Response to the humanitarian situation in Iraq.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-36873 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.15 p.m.

Mr. Traoré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette for her introductory statement. I would also like to thank our guests for their important statements, which have given us much valuable information about the relevance and delicate nature of the emergency humanitarian issues in post-war Iraq. I would also like to pay tribute to the humanitarian agencies in Iraq for their excellent work and for the valuable and important services they are providing the Iraqi people under particularly difficult circumstances, at times even at the risk of their staff members' lives.

It is clear from the presentations we heard this morning that insecurity and lack of order are the major handicaps that almost all agencies must deal with and that limit the effectiveness of their efforts. This morning's adoption of resolution 1483 (2003) will no doubt help to speed up their efforts on the ground. The specific issue of insecurity nevertheless remains to be addressed. I have just one question for the representatives of the humanitarian agencies with us today — which is one that echoes the question raised this morning by Ambassador Pleuger. Given the importance and urgency of the Iraqi people's needs, what specific suggestions can they make to the Council in order to gradually end insecurity and make their efforts more effective as soon as possible?

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I, too, want to thank the representatives of the agencies here, all of their colleagues, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations local staff in Iraq and all the others for their tremendous dedicated efforts to ensure a humanitarian response in Iraq at a time when it is very important to support the Iraqi people.

This morning, the Security Council adopted a really historic resolution that confirms the vital role of the United Nations and the international community in the future of Iraq. We find from the presentations we heard this morning — and we know first hand, of course, from our experience on the ground — that the needs are great, but we have common objectives and a sense of purpose. I am also struck by the thread that ran throughout the presentations we heard this morning: the great amount of experience, resources and political will in this Council that we can bring to bear to help the people of Iraq and to create a better Iraq. I hope and I trust that we will continue to work well together, especially on the ground, in bringing relief to people who have suffered for too long.

The resolution we adopted this morning also calls on Member States to make contributions to the United Nations appeal and to provide food, medicine and other resources necessary for the rehabilitation of Iraq's infrastructure. We encourage all Member States and international organizations to respond as best and as soon as they can.

The United States is supporting relief and reconstruction projects in Iraq from the macro to the micro level, ranging from reinforcing the Mosul dam and repairing ports and bridges to funding clean-up projects in four Baghdad neighbourhoods containing 16,000 people. One cannot really get the sense from the press, or even from looking at one part of the picture, of the amount of work that is going on throughout the country even as we speak, notwithstanding all the problems that exist. I should like to give Council members an idea of the range of the effort that is already under way, with more progress and new results coming about every day.

Everybody who has spoken, I think, has emphasized that security is the key problem and the top priority, as Mr. Morris said. We are making every effort to ensure that the security situation is brought under control and stabilized as soon as possible. We are deploying additional United States military police. The coalition is taking steps to decrease the availability of weapons. There is a team in Iraq reviewing security, law enforcement, the justice system and prison issues so that it can come up with urgent and specific recommendations for action. The State Department is recruiting 1,000 United States police advisers and trainers and other countries are contributing as well. Over 5,000 Baghdad police officers are back on duty. We are approaching our coalition partners for international police advisers. The resolution just adopted invites international cooperation in restoring stability and security and we hope to have many more partners in this endeavour. In addition, the payment of salaries will contribute greatly to stabilization, particularly as police officers realize that they will be paid upon returning to work.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing micro-grants designed to build confidence among Iraq's diverse

ethnic groups at the local level, strengthening the involvement and capacity of local and community institutions to respond rapidly to local needs, such as small-scale infrastructure repair. What we are trying to do here is to stimulate increased Iraqi participation in the restoration of public services, community security, conflict prevention, information and communications support and short-term employment opportunities. In Umm Qasr, for one example, grants based on community priorities established by the new town council will establish a fully functional office for the council, create a telephone and Internet centre, increase sports and recreational facilities for youth and rehabilitate a secondary school.

We have begun implementation of a rapid programme to restore the essential functions of priority ministries. This is providing national and local-level ministry offices with minor repairs, furniture, equipment and supplies so that they can begin operations. USAID is working to provide essential communications links among ministries in the country by installing satellite or high-frequency radio-based connections at central ministries and commissions to permit voice, fax and data transmissions between Baghdad and operational units in governance throughout the country.

In an important step, the ministries are ready to start paying salaries in Baghdad on 24 May — that is, in two days — and in the meantime the United States Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance has made emergency cash payments to 1.1 million civil servants in Northern, Central and Southern Iraq in order to start providing income for people who are coming back to work and to produce more cash in the economy. I should also note that, for all the difficulties that exist, there is economic activity resuming in all kinds of ways, including both cash and barter. Markets are up and running in many places, including in Baghdad itself, and while no one would pretend it is normal life, activity is resuming.

On human rights, the USAID Abuse Prevention Unit, which is part of our disaster assistance response team, is working to identify, track and report acts of retribution and other abuses. It has investigated several mass graves, as well as property issues, and the Abuse Prevention Unit's officers are coordinating closely with ICRC and United Nations agencies in helping to develop public information campaigns to promote tolerance, justice and respect for the rule of law. We trained hundreds of United States civil affairs officers — that is, military officers who work on civilian affairs — in protection principles prior to their deployment to the Gulf. We have developed and distributed field guides on preventing and mitigating abuses.

We are also working with others to address health and nutrition issues. For example, in response to nutrient deficiencies in the Iraqi population, a USAID private-sector partner named ABT Associates will provide four grain mills in Baghdad with food-fortification equipment and technical assistance to enable flour to be fortified with vitamins and minerals, including iron, which has been missing in parts of the Iraqi diet. ABT Associates will continue discussions with Iraqis in hopes of installing equipment in other mills in Iraq and is establishing a medical supplies and equipment management systems database for tracking all international medical donations.

We applaud the monitoring by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) of the nutritional status in response to nutritional needs in Iraq and welcome recommendations from UNICEF on further specific actions needed. We encouraged and welcomed the proposal of the World Food Programme to procure grain locally in Iraq and hope that all practical arrangements necessary for this will be worked out with utmost speed, given that the harvest is already standing in the fields and that farmers will have to be paid immediately.

We have under way many, many projects to begin to restore normalcy. Just to mention a couple more, we are working with Bechtel to restore the 400-kilovolt power lines into the Baghdad ring — an essential source of power for the entire country — and to supply equipment to Iraqi power authorities for necessary repairs. In addition, 50,000 cylinders of liquid petroleum gas were to be delivered to 18 sites in Baghdad today.

The Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance has begun three demining missions in Al Hillah. In an important contribution to social stabilization, a USAID contractor is helping the Ministry of Education to administer tests for sixth-, ninth- and twelfth-grade students so that they can advance to the next grade level. We are gathering hydraulic and economic information in support of the restoration initiative in the southern marshes, where the

Marsh Arabs have traditionally lived. In conclusion, I would like to inform the Council that USAID contractors are working closely with the International Civil Aviation Organization to ensure that Iraq's airports and civil aviation systems are rehabilitated so that we can facilitate the rapid re-entry of Iraq into international aviation systems of commerce. All of these activities are illustrative of our efforts and commitment to meet reconstruction needs throughout Iraq. We welcome Mr. Malloch Brown's comments this morning about getting the needs assessment process moving. That is an important part of the future effort.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): On behalf of the Angolan delegation, I should like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General for the update presented to the Council, which has been enriched today by the reports of firsthand field experiences presented by the representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

With the adoption today by the Security Council of resolution 1483 (2003), the international community has taken a tremendous step forward towards resolving the security, humanitarian, political, economic and social situation in Iraq. From today on, we have at our disposal a blueprint to deal with the situation in Iraq and to begin resolving, in a sustained manner, the immense problems caused by the international sanctions imposed on Iraq as well as healing the wounds of war.

The appeal to Member States to respond to the humanitarian and other needs of the Iraqi people by providing food, medical supplies and the resources necessary for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Iraq's economic infrastructure has already had a very positive response from the international community. It is our belief that the adoption of resolution 1483 (2003) will give fresh impetus to what we believe can become a great movement of solidarity with the suffering Iraqi people.

The picture that was painted of the situation in Iraq is of great concern. Nevertheless, it is our conviction that the international community can further mobilize the goodwill and resources to advance in the reconstruction of Iraq at all levels. Iraq has resources — both human and material — that, if properly directed to the right objectives — could, in a relatively short period of time, enable the Iraqi people to overcome their difficulties.

In our view, efforts and resources should be concentrated on rehabilitation efforts in order to provide, as soon as possible, improved living conditions for the population and to avoid the most acute social-infrastructure-related problems.

A decisive effort should be directed to the rehabilitation of the electricity network, given its direct implication in the normal functioning of hospitals, schools and particularly sewerage systems, whose malfunction affects water and sanitation, causing grave health problems. The rehabilitation of the electricity network will greatly improve the quality of citizens' daily lives.

The repair and rehabilitation of the basic infrastructure — mainly in areas critical to humanitarian needs, such as health, education, water, sanitation and electricity — in a strategy framework devised by the United Nations Development Programme is a sensible approach to the situation in Iraq.

This will enable the creation of jobs, providing employment to vulnerable groups. Furthermore, this approach can rely on the expertise of Iraqi professionals, whose competence and qualifications are well known, and is a concrete contribution to the building of peace through community participation in those activities.

It is our deepest hope that the Iraqi people, after too many years of sanctions and of war, will seize this opportunity for a new beginning, and, since this beginning has its roots in a very rich cultural heritage, all hopes have the possibility of coming true. It is also hope that the international community will keep its pledge to the Iraqi people and that the Security Council will remain seized of the Iraqi issue, so that the rights of the Iraqi people can be fully respected.

To conclude, I should like to address a few questions to the panellists, and specifically to the representative of the United Nations Development Programme. We would like to ask to what extent the adoption of resolution 1483 (2003) will strengthen UNDP's mandate for reconstruction work in Iraq, and we would like to know what the assessed funding needs are for the short and medium term. We would

like also to ask how long, according to UNDP assessments, it will take to complete the rehabilitation of the basic infrastructure.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We, too, are grateful to the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Fréchette, and to the leadership of the various specialized agencies of the United Nations and of the International Committee of the Red Cross for the briefings they have provided on their operations in Iraq to provide emergency assistance to the Iraqi people.

Like many others who have spoken, we are primarily concerned with the ongoing instability in many regions of Iraq, as a result of which there still cannot be a full resumption of the work of international humanitarian personnel in that country.

As the Council is aware, responsibility for ensuring the safety of United Nations staff and of the personnel of other humanitarian organizations, as well as ensuring them unimpeded access to all persons in need, in accordance with the provisions of international humanitarian law and paragraph 8 of resolution 1472 (2003), lies with the coalition forces. In this regard, we hope that, in order to resolve this issue in the near term, additional necessary measures will be taken.

Overall, the situation remains alarming with respect to supplying the central and southern provinces of Iraq with sufficient drinking water. This problem has become particularly important in the light of recent outbreaks of infectious disease. There is a need to note that establishing a water supply system, particularly in the major cities, is closely linked to the restoration of the operation of treatment plants, most of which were damaged during hostilities or were looted in the ensuing period.

We would note also that an equally complex situation — as seen in the presentations made today by the representatives of humanitarian agencies — has also emerged with respect to ensuring the normal operation of Iraqi hospitals, where, in addition to the shortage of staff, there is a critical shortage of specialized medical equipment, which was also looted recently. This has resulted in a serious deterioration in the level of health care in most regions of the country when compared with the prewar period, which has brought additional suffering to the Iraqi people. This problem also requires very close attention.

One other point to which we would like to draw the Council's attention is the status of the electrical sector in Iraq. Prior to the war, the situation in that sector was not all that favourable, and now the Iraqis face the serious problem of its reconstruction. There is no need to restate the importance of this sector in the maintenance of the entire civil infrastructure in Iraq, since it is also essential for the operation of hospitals, water-treatment plants, schools and many other facilities that have clearly defined humanitarian designations. Clearly, one cannot restore the Iraqi economy with only the low-power mobile electric generators whose delivery has been given priority recently. We need more radical measures. Clearly, one cannot restore the Iraqi economy just with low-power mobile electric generators, the delivery of which has recently been given priority. We need more radical measures.

In this context, we believe it is vital to implement the maximum volume of contracts that were concluded under the oil-for-food programme, which encompass such sectors as water supply, electricity, and the supply of vehicles and other essential goods. All of this will clearly be needed during the economic reconstruction of Iraq. We can say the same about equipment for the oil sector, which is essentially the engine for further development of the country's entire economy.

We are certain that, in line with the resolution adopted today by the Security Council, the Secretariat should take all necessary measures to ensure that these and many other problems related to implementation of contracts are fully resolved. We believe that this would help to meet many of the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people and would help to ensure that the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other humanitarian organizations can do effective work in Iraq.

Mr. King (United Kingdom): We welcome this opportunity to discuss the humanitarian situation in Iraq. I would like to start by saluting the efforts of the agencies that are represented here, and in particular the United Nations national staff who, as we have heard, continued to work, and the outstanding work that has been done by the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC). The United Kingdom looks forward to continuing to work extremely closely with all the teams involved on the ground to meet the challenges ahead.

We believe that the humanitarian situation in Iraq is getting better. But, in saying that, we do not underestimate the challenges that lie ahead. As, I think, has emerged clearly from the discussion we are having here today, a major concern — perhaps, the major concern — continues to be security. This remains at the top of the coalition agenda. Our assessment is that incidents continue, but on a sporadic basis. They remain localized and, for the most part, at a low level. We have been taking all possible steps to improve security and law and order in the short term. We are beginning to plan for the medium to longer term, and in particular, to look at how best to transfer responsibilities to the Iraqis themselves, including in this area. There are plans under discussion for the establishment of a trained police force and, indeed, as a concrete gauge of that, there are already 1,000 Iraqi police carrying out joint patrols with United Kingdom personnel.

Let me just say a brief word about the situation in the United Kingdom area of operation. We are working to involve Iraqis in the civil administration structures. We have established committees throughout our area of operation to engage with the local population on the restoration of public services. And the situation on basic services has improved significantly. Eighty per cent of Basra now has access to running water. Seventy-five per cent is covered by the sewage system. The An Nasiriyah electricity generation plant is running at full capacity for the first time since 1991. All hospitals have been provided with power, fuel and water supplies.

We stress that this is only a start. We recognize that there is more to do. It is useful to us to have a detailed assessment from the agencies about where the impact of security concerns is being felt most keenly. We note and welcome the World Food Programme reports, which have reaffirmed today, that there is no food crisis, and we welcome this opportunity for an exchange on the implications of developments on the ground for the work planned under the flash appeal.

Security concerns have not stopped our efforts to meet Iraq's humanitarian needs, working in many cases with and through the United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in areas where the United Kingdom has experience and, we hope, something to bring. Our overall objective is to provide support where there is greatest need. To take that agenda forward, we are establishing a presence on the ground of staff with humanitarian and development expertise as quickly as possible. We are starting to build that presence up in Basra, but we also have staff working with the agencies in Baghdad.

Coordination is obviously vital and, if anything, will get more important as more donors and actors arrive on the scene. Much of the assistance is being coordinated in Kuwait at the Humanitarian Operations Centre, but that is continuing only until July. It is a United Nations lead, and we welcome the opportunity to continue our discussions, here and subsequently, on how the Humanitarian Coordinator, and indeed the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, will help us and tackle the issues of coordination involved. We hope and expect that we will need to factor in the NGOs, as well as agencies.

Looking beyond the immediate humanitarian need, the United Kingdom will work to help Iraq reach its full potential to secure a stable future where the needs of the whole population are met equitably and sustainably. Over the next six months, we believe that means focusing on a number of points: first, reducing dependence on emergency assistance; secondly, creating transparent economic governance and legislative structures; thirdly, ensuring the full participation of the Iraqi people, including — and this point has come up a number of times in our discussions today — women, in defining their own governance structures; fourthly, ensuring the delivery of essential public services; and, finally, addressing the wider regional implications of the recent conflict. The United Kingdom contribution to all of this will need to fit in with the international framework that is going to be agreed upon with and by the Iraqi people.

If I may just pick up one issue of key concern to the United Kingdom and others — the participation of women in the new Iraq — we welcome what we have heard from the agencies about what they are doing to promote the inclusion of women in and through their work. We believe that the right decisions in this area can only accelerate Iraq's acquisition of the capacity to manage its own affairs successfully. We recall lessons that have been learned from other situations, which show the continuing importance of the protection of civilians in the post-conflict reconstruction phase. Following the adoption of this morning's resolution, we would welcome the opportunity today, and subsequently, to discuss plans for the protection of civilians, as we go forward.

Finally, just briefly to touch on media reports of the discovery of further mass graves, the security of evidence that may be linked to war crimes or crimes against humanity is a priority for the commanders on the ground, although I think that we have to recognize that it is one among a number of priorities. We have a team of nine forensic experts from the United Kingdom who departed for Baghdad yesterday. They will be there to investigate the mass graves and will make recommendations for further United Kingdom assistance on this subject.

In conclusion, let me just reassure all here that the United Kingdom humanitarian community, both within Government and outside, will continue to place the highest priority on Iraq and will contribute strongly to the upcoming appeals and other calls for assistance.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, and your delegation for your initiative of convening this meeting and this dialogue at such a timely moment. This will enable the Council to direct its decision-making and activities on humanitarian issues in Iraq based on the opinions, judgements, points of view and very valuable information that have been provided to the Council by the individuals invited to this meeting. We would like to thank Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator; Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme; the representatives of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund; and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Believe me, I certainly do not envy them the daunting task that confronts them in Iraq.

Looking at the situation from the distance of the Security Council Chamber, it is very difficult for the Council even to imagine the magnitude of the work involved in reconstructing Iraq and attending to the humanitarian situation. I do not think that there is any precedent for this kind of situation, in which a State structure has totally collapsed. There have been many cases in which changes of Government as cataclysmic as the present case still left behind some sort of institutional structure — or possessed structures that were so precarious that it little mattered whether they existed or not. But in the case of the Iraq, we are faced with a situation in which, due to the nature of the Iraqi regime, with its authoritarian character and its strict control over the entire structure of the Government, the collapse of the regime represents not merely a change of individuals but the total destruction of a structure, accompanied by great economic and social impact and the physical destruction of institutions, including buildings and records, which will be extremely hard to reconstruct. Therefore, I believe that in the humanitarian and support tasks that the United Nations will carry out based on the resolution that the Council has adopted today, the extent of the reconstruction effort is almost physically indicative of the circumstances existing in that country.

My delegation is therefore attentive to, and concerned about, the type of institutional capacities that the United Nations will have to deploy and the relationship that will be created between the United Nations agencies responsible for attending to the humanitarian situation and the Authority representing the occupying Powers, because they are going to be operating in the same space and will have to work side by side as they lay their bricks. For the institutions will need to be rebuilt in order to enable Iraq to attend to its humanitarian needs.

There is another topic that has already been touched upon: the intimate relationship between security on the ground and the capacity of the United Nations to provide humanitarian services. I would therefore like to ask what the prospects are for the emergence of Iraqi civilian institutions — even nascent ones — that could eventually to some extent take over those efforts and that would represent Iraqi society's efforts to organize in order to provide for its own needs. In other, comparable situations in which disasters involving such thoroughgoing collapses of institutions occur, civil society has shown a certain ability to respond by getting organized. In Iraq, it seems that such abilities are attributable to religious elements and to those belonging to certain groups. But I wonder whether there is any sign of an emergence of civilian entities whose underlying purpose is simply to attend to specific humanitarian situations and the concrete needs of communities.

We are also facing a phenomenon of violence and social disruption of whose magnitude we are just beginning to have accurate readings. The looting and the lack of security in Iraq seem linked to widespread disorder and the complete loss of authority by the institutions entrusted with ensuring public law and order. We are confronted with the emergence of phenomena that could have a deeply rooted dimension:

criminal organizations that may emerge and certain patterns of violence that may have to be clearly identified in order to counteract them.

In that respect, we have heard non-governmental organizations speak about kidnappings and the abuse of women. We would like to know whether the humanitarian organizations and the United Nations agencies can inform us about the nature and scope of those phenomena. Are they associated with acts of revenge, the massive settling of scores with the Saddam Hussain regime, or are they linked to the emergence of other phenomena related to the breakdown in authority and the ensuing social dynamic?

We are also interested in the issue of the protection of humanitarian workers. What work plans are being developed to increase the capacity to address humanitarian issues, once there are more staff to deal with those issues and once they have greater mobility throughout the territory of Iraq? That would, of course, require specific security measures to be taken and specific security criteria to be established. What can our guests tell us about progress in that field as well as about relations between the United Nations humanitarian agencies and the Authority of the occupying Powers?

In conclusion, we would like to ask whether the role of the Special Representative will also include coordinating all the United Nations agencies as they fulfil their commitments and their work plans. Do we anticipate a single joint work programme being crafted to cover the efforts of all the agencies and all the tasks of the Special Representative?

Once again, I would like to express my gratitude for the information and views provided by those who have briefed the Security Council today. We wish them luck in their work in Iraq; they will need it.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like at the outset to thank the Deputy Secretary-General, Louise Frechette, and the executive officers of United Nations specialized agencies, for their briefings. I am pleased to hear about the progress that has been achieved with regard to United Nations humanitarian assistance activities in Iraq. I would like to express appreciation for the efforts made by the relief workers under difficult circumstances to ease the suffering of the Iraqi people and to resolve the difficulties that they are facing.

As has been pointed out by a number of my colleagues, after a decade of sanctions and in the wake of the recent war, the humanitarian situation is grave. There are deficiencies in the areas of nutrition, basic supplies, infrastructure and sanitation, and in some parts of the country epidemics have broken out. In all these areas urgent assistance from the international community is required.

The Chinese Government has been closely following the humanitarian situation in Iraq. After the outbreak of war, we quickly provided emergency humanitarian supplies. I would like to reaffirm that China is ready to work with the international community in its efforts to alleviate the humanitarian situation in Iraq. At present, the situation in Iraq is still unstable. Security conditions there are worrying, and this is impeding the humanitarian assistance efforts of the United Nations.

China calls on the parties concerned to fulfil their obligations as set out in the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Regulations and to facilitate the activities of humanitarian relief workers so that they can have full, unimpeded access to all the Iraqi people who need assistance, while ensuring their safety, security and freedom of movement in Iraq.

This morning the Security Council adopted resolution 1483 (2003), which lays the groundwork for enabling the United Nations to play a significant role in the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. China is pleased to note that, in accordance with the resolution, the Secretary-General is to appoint a Special Representative as soon as possible, to assist in the various aspects of the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. China believes that that will facilitate the efficient and orderly carrying out of humanitarian assistance in Iraq.

The oil-for-food programme has long played a significant role in easing the humanitarian situation in Iraq. After the outbreak of war, the humanitarian programme was adjusted to take account of any possible humanitarian crises. In accordance with resolution 1483 (2003), which was adopted earlier today, the oil-for-food programme will be gradually phased out. China hopes that the Office for the Iraq Programme will work with the parties concerned to minimize any negative impact on the humanitarian situation in Iraq that might be caused by the termination of the programme. At the same time, China believes that we should fully implement the

programme and fully utilize its resources, especially the resources that have been approved, so that the post-conflict reconstruction of Iraq can proceed smoothly.

Mr. Maquieira (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like first of all to thank Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Mr. David Nabarro, Mr. James Morris, Mr. Nils Kastberg and Mr. Jakob Kellenberger for the comprehensive information they have given us concerning the various parts of the humanitarian picture in Iraq.

We share the sentiments expressed by the members of the Council with regard to the situation in Iraq. There has been some progress, although the situation remains precarious. We also share the concern expressed about security in Iraq. As has been said, efforts are being made to improve the situation. We hope that it will improve rapidly so that humanitarian assistance can be provided and the enormous humanitarian task in various sectors can proceed smoothly, as required by the urgency of the situation.

I would like to ask a number of questions. I have already written them down, so, of course, my concerns may overlap some of those that have already been expressed.

One of the results of the lack of security is that various aspects of the provision of services might to some extent be entrusted to religious groups in parts of Baghdad and in the south of the country. I would like to know whether measures are being taken to take control of the hospitals and other service entities so as to take them out of the hands of religious groups.

At a recent meeting of the Council, my delegation asked for information with regard to salaries for local workers. According to available information, the situation has not improved. We would like to know more about the payment of wages to local workers, as that would have a direct impact on the poorest families.

We were informed this morning that the nutritional needs of the three northern governorates are once again being addressed and that, fortunately, there is no food crisis in Iraq. We would like to know how long it would take to resume delivery of the 480,000 metric tons normally distributed in the country. We would also like to know about the situation regarding the quantity of supplies that are usually distributed in other zones.

Given that the oil-for-food programme has been extended for another six months, we would also like to know whether it will be necessary to buy food during this period and whether provisions have been made to fund such purchases.

Finally, reference has been made both in the press and in today's discussion to the mass graves that have been discovered. We are concerned about the problem of identifying remains and returning them to family members. We would like to know who is taking responsibility for this matter in the field.

Ms. Menéndez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): We too would like to thank Ms. Fréchette for the presentation she made today. We would also like to thank the representatives of the agencies present here and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross for their work in the field and for their briefings today.

Since the beginning of the Iraqi crisis — and given the current circumstances — one of Spain's main priorities has been to address the basic needs of that country's population by contributing humanitarian assistance as a matter of the greatest urgency, in accordance with the demands of the new reality on the ground. In that regard, and in a constant effort to contribute to overcoming the challenges that have arisen in recent weeks, Spain's contribution has played out on several fronts.

First of all, my Government responded immediately to the financial needs that emerged, including the needs indicated in the Flash Appeal launched by the Secretary-General. To date, Spain has committed a total of about 65.45 million euros — about $75.43 million — out of which 5 million euros have been allocated to various United Nations programmes and agencies and 7.2 million to the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office.

Moreover, in terms of bilateral assistance, we have provided 37 million euros in outright grants in order to provide equipment in basic sectors and to finance other projects and activities to assist the least advantaged among the population. Lastly, in addition to those amounts, 16 million euros have been earmarked for humanitarian assistance provided in the context of our Joint Humanitarian Support Unit.

The second pillar of Spain's response to the situation in Iraq is based on the human dimension of

our contribution. As soon as coalition operations began in Iraq, Spain sent a Joint Humanitarian Support Unit composed of 900 men and women. I would like to point out the fact that a medical unit containing many hospital beds was among the tools available to the Joint Unit.

Turning to the immediate future, and bearing in mind what has been repeatedly stated here today with regard to the still fragile security situation in Iraq, my Government is considering the possibility of sending a number of members of its Guardia Civil to assist in maintaining law and order and, in the medium term, to assist in training new members of Iraqi's security forces and in planning their activities.

My Government hopes that, along with the framework established through the Council's adoption this morning of resolution 1483 (2003) — of which, as members are aware, Spain was one of the original sponsors — the measures adopted by various Member States, including Spain, will contribute to improving the situation, bringing stability to Iraq and well-being to its people.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, let me thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this debate. I would also like to express our gratitude to Ms. Fréchette for her presentation. I would also like in particular to thank the officials of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as well as the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), for their presence among us today. On the very day that we have adopted a resolution that I believe underscores the commitment of the international community to address, in a unified and resolute manner, the challenges in post-conflict Iraq, their participation in this discussion has a great symbolic impact.

Like my colleagues have done, I would like to underscore some of the points that were made in the briefings. My first point — which is one that Ms. Fréchette has also made — is that, while there is no humanitarian catastrophe per se in Iraq, the situation is nevertheless extremely fragile. It is a situation in which the health, nutritional and other needs of the people were already enormous prior to the conflict.

Secondly, as all other delegations have pointed out, we believe that the security situation continues to be a key element, as well as one of considerable concern. Like the representative of Mexico for example, we too were particularly struck by the information we have just heard about the kidnapping of women and of young girls in schools. If such incidents continue or worsen, it will lead to a climate in which women are excluded. That would bode ill for what we are seeking in Iraq, which is exactly the opposite.

My third point is that the statements that have been made demonstrate the degree to which the coordination of all the efforts of the various agencies in the context of the current disorder is indeed crucial. It should perhaps be linked to the appointment under today's resolution of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

My fourth point is that special attention will have to be given to the linkage between the humanitarian and reconstruction phases, as Mr. Malloch Brown noted this morning. We believe that this issue must be emphasized.

Like my colleagues, I have many questions to ask, but most have already been raised. Nevertheless, I wish to address several subjects. My first question is specifically with respect to coordination. Are we already in a position to make an initial assessment of such coordination and, on that basis, to draw lessons with respect to the role of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General? Are there expectations regarding the Special Representative's mandate?

My second question, regarding the establishment of parallel politico-religious structures that are currently assuming certain social functions, has already been raised by Ambassador Maquieira of Chile. My question is addressed in particular to the representatives of WHO and ICRC. It would appear that such parallel structures are emerging in the health system, and particularly in hospitals, to provide health care and solidarity. How are WHO and ICRC dealing with such structures? What kind of contact might they have with them? What assessment can be made of their significance?

My third question is addressed specifically to the representative of UNDP. How does he perceive the situation with regard to demining problems and the degree to which they could affect the reconstruction of infrastructure in Iraq?

Finally, I have one last question with respect to Iraq's food autonomy. I believe that others have already raised this question. Is there a possibility of United Nations purchase of local produce, funded by the oil for food programme? Is such a possibility already being explored, discussed and elaborated?

Allow me to reiterate our high esteem, gratitude and admiration to all the personnel of the various United Nations agencies and of ICRC working in Iraq. They are making an invaluable contribution to the reconstruction of that country.

The President: I call on Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme.

Mr. Morris: May I first express our profound gratitude to you, Sir, and to all of your colleagues on the Security Council for the fact that you would be willing to spend as much time with us as you have today. You will never know how much your interest in what we do means to us and to our colleagues around the world.

Fifty-nine staff members of the World Food Programme (WFP) have lost their lives in the past 14 years in the line of duty. The work our national and international staff do is oftentimes under the most difficult circumstances. The fact that we will be able to convey the Security Council's interest and the appreciation expressed by all will be a real boost to our team. I should also thank the many Council members that have been incredibly generous in their support as it relates not only to Iraq, but in fact to our work all around the world.

First, let me say that, as of 1 June, the 480,000-metric-ton monthly requirement will be in place. There will be adequate food in Iraq to feed every single citizen. Our plan is for WFP to help provide that food through oil for food resources and through donor support for the next five months. We are hopeful that the Ministry of Trade in Iraq will be back on its feet by then and able to work through its very successful and substantial distribution system. It has a distribution system of 44,000 outlets all across the country and it functions very well.

Once we got into Iraq, we discovered that the country had more food reserves than we were aware of. With what we have been able to pull out of the oil for food programme and with the approximately $500 million our donors have given us, we will have enough food — together with what is in Iraq's reserve stock — to feed the people of Iraq through the end of the year.

We are very much focused on the issue of local purchase. The barley harvest and the wheat harvest are beginning right now and last a few weeks. The tradition in Iraq has been for the Government to buy these crops in their entirety. I think I mentioned this morning that it had been paying $75 per metric ton. It costs us about $200 per metric ton to move wheat into the country. With proceeds from the oil for food programme, we intend to buy at least one million metric tons. We will pay $105 per ton for the food. It is important that the grain board and all of the infrastructure for acquisition and distribution of locally purchased commodities be put back in place. We try to buy locally every time we have the chance.

I am grateful for the emphasis on security. There is no doubt in my mind that it is everyone's top priority. My sense is that a lot of the turmoil relates to the uncertainty of the Iraqi people and to their level of confidence that a system that has fed them for many years will still be there. I tried to say this morning that 60 per cent of the Iraqi people get 100 per cent of their food from the Government and that 100 per cent of the people get most of their food from the Government, so we are working at trying to give some degree of confidence to the Iraqi people that this system will continue to function.

Members of the Council should know that the United Nations family works pretty well together on the ground. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WFP work as a good team. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) gets part of the credit for that; the United Nations Development Group gets part of the credit, too. I know the Council has a great focus on harmonization and on how we work together as a team. We do that really very well.

We also work well with the Red Cross. We now have 10 NGO partners functioning in Iraq all across the country and doing a good job. We also, I believe, are working well — at least in our case — with the Ministry of Trade. I met with the two leaders of the Ministry of Trade when I was there last Sunday; they are working with the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA). Every other day

they have a senior staff meeting together with the United Nations agencies. There is a good sense of collegiality and of doing our work well together.

We essentially have the food we need to do what we need to do. We still have a need for some salt and something called weaning cereals, but those are not substantial figures that we need to address. We will get that done.

Security, in part, is being provided by the occupying militaries, but in the long run this needs to be provided by local people, and I am pleased with the commitment that people will begin to be paid in two days. Security guards have not been paid for a long time, and it is very difficult to ask them to come back and resume their occupation when they do not have any confidence in compensation.

I am grateful for the high praise that many here have given to the United Nations country teams and their national staff. We had 800 people with the World Food Programme in Iraq work right through the conflict, and they did a superior piece of work.

I think that those are my comments. Once again, I am grateful for the privilege of being here and for the importance and value the Council attaches to the work that all of us do as it relates to issues of international security.

The President: I would like to thank Mr. James Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, for those remarks and for the splendid work that the World Food Programme is doing in Iraq and elsewhere.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme.

Mr. Malloch Brown: Mr. President, I wish to thank all your colleagues, who have shown such interest in this subject and asked such thoughtful and difficult questions, in some cases. Let me also just echo what my colleague Jim Morris said: just because the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) does not have a nameplate at this table, I do not think that we should forget to express tremendous gratitude to Kenzo Oshima and all his colleagues in OCHA, and particularly to the Humanitarian Coordinator, who, of course, also reports through the oil for food programme and Mr. Benon Sevan. That whole coordination mechanism has, I think, proved absolutely critical to all of our efforts.

Turning now to the questions posed to us, a number of Council members, starting with the Ambassador of Germany, asked whom we are working with. Well, we are working with municipal authorities, local community leaders of different kinds, directors-general of national ministries. We have found many very good local national partners. We are also, as Jim Morris just said, coordinating, I think, extremely effectively with ORHA and the coalition forces, which have gone out of their way to try to engage us in coordination discussions. I think that there is two-way coordination with both local and national Iraqi authorities and with the coalition forces, and we all are very pleased with how that is going.

The Ambassador of Cameroon raised the question of the link between the humanitarian response and reconstruction needs. This was a theme to which many other representatives returned during the meeting.

A colleague from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has just equipped me with a wonderful way of entering this discussion, which is to consider this first humanitarian phase as an effort to return the Iraqis' standard of living to what it was in 2000, before recent events began, and to consider the subsequent reconstruction effort an attempt to return the Iraqis' standard of living to what it was 20 years ago, before the cycle of violence and conflict which has consumed that country since the Iraq-Iran war.

To give the Council a sense of this, before that war, according to the data from UNDP's Human Development Index, Iraq enjoyed a standard of living which put it next door to Iran — in other words, a standard of living of a middle-income oil-producing country. By the time of current events, Iraq's Human Development Index rating had dropped next door to that of Lesotho, a poor, landlocked least-developed country. Therefore the scale of reconstruction in terms of improving the social indicators — the lives of ordinary Iraqi men, women and children — is really considerable, and I think that that, in a sense, will be the critical second phase of our intervention.

Let me also say that I think that the reconstruction activities will be characterized by an effort to focus on how the Iraqis themselves, using their own resources and their own human capacities, can take the lead in their own reconstruction. We do

not envisage the same huge requirement for external resources, despite the great size of the challenge, that one had seen during this initial humanitarian phase in terms of scale. The resources may be more externally, but, as a proportion of global development spending, they are unlikely to be as dominant as they have been as a proportion of humanitarian spending in recent months, because this is a country that, once its economy is operating properly again, is a rich country with huge human talent able to take a major role in its reconstruction.

We were also asked about what is available to us under the oil for food programme. As with our colleagues in the World Food Programme and the other agencies, we are able to make very considerable use of that programme. Under the 3 June deadline, before the current resolution, we had already identified something like $270 million of contracts which we felt could be delivered within the allowable dates up to 3 June and which provided critical priority items in the electricity and other sectors.

We now, with the six-month extension, are looking at further contracts with a value of another $250 million. We therefore want to stress that there are major items in the pipeline which are relevant to the infrastructure sectors that we have been addressing. That is rather offset by the fact that we do not believe that we will be able to complete more than half of the major ongoing electricity rehabilitation programme that we are undertaking in the north of the country, which has something like $860 million outstanding of work to do, within the remaining six months of the programme.

We were also asked by the representative of Angola to what extent resolution 1483 (2003) changes UNDP's role and mandate. I think that UNDP's role and mandate are not expressly changed by this Security Council resolution, but it is by the Secretary-General's management follow-up, if you like, to that resolution.

First, through my role as Chairman of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), I expect, as I said in my opening statement, to coordinate the activities of that Group on needs assessment and the planning of reconstruction; to ensure that those efforts are made in partnership with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and in partnership with interested donors who wish to participate in these activities; and to ensure that all the undertakings that UNDG members make fully reflect the emerging priorities of the Iraqis themselves.

Secondly, as Administrator of UNDP, clearly, I will be focusing UNDP's efforts not just on the continuing infrastructure-rehabilitation role we take on because of the exceptional expertise we have in Iraq because of our role under the oil-for-food programme, but I will also be focusing them on the whole democratic governance mandate, which has become the core of UNDP's global practice. Obviously, we will be seeking to support the emergence of Iraqi government through working on issues such as governance, the strengthening and modernizing of public administration, assistance on rule of law issues, transitional justice, public sector reform and other key issues where we feel that we can offer support. Obviously, we have huge sub-practice areas also in issues such as elections and the strengthening of parliament. So, as those become relevant in Iraq's future, we would expect to provide technical assistance in these areas as well.

We were asked the question of both how long it would take to complete the reconstruction and how much it would cost. We have been on record for some months as saying it will be an extremely expensive reconstruction operation, but we very much hope that methods can be found to finance it as much as possible through Iraqi resources, through oil revenue and other income sources available to the Government: first to the Authority and later to an Iraqi Government. With our colleagues in the World Bank, we will obviously be seeking to propose financing mechanisms that maximize the use of internal Iraqi resources and minimize the calls on finite amounts of world development assistance. But I do not think we should hide the fact that there will, nevertheless, be a major call on international donor resources for this extraordinary undertaking that lies ahead of all of us.

I was specifically asked about the dredging operation in Umm Qasr. Let me just very quickly say that it is financed both out of a Japanese contribution and from three oil-for-food contributions that we have been able to utilize. Between them, this amounts to something like $43 million. Under these contracts, we are able to pay for heavy dredging of the port. At the moment, the food that the World Food Programme (WFP) is delivering has to be unloaded into small boats before it can be taken to the actual harbourside to be unloaded. Once this dredging programme begins, in a

week's time, it is going to be possible, after about a month of dredging, to bring big ships directly to the portside and in so doing accelerate the unloading and distribution of food in a quite dramatic way.

Also under one of the oil-for-food contracts — and there are several others in addition to the dredging ones I have mentioned — we will be able to utilize a contract to remove 19 shipwrecks that are blocking entry to the port. We will be able to drag those ships out in the coming weeks. As to how quickly it will all be done, as one of my colleagues observed, dredging ships move slowly, and they are sailing at stately speed towards Umm Qasr as we speak, from the various countries in which we contracted them.

Let me just say a word on the United Kingdom's concern about the coordination of humanitarian and reconstruction issues. It is our view that, with the cooperation of interested parties, we would hope, perhaps on the sidelines of the meeting on the revision of the humanitarian appeal in June, to hold a first planning session on reconstruction. We hope that would then allow for extensive work over the summer months here on needs assessment, according to a set of partnerships, principals and approaches agreed at that meeting. This would allow us to return, perhaps by September, with the elements of a reconstruction programme, one that would likely continue to evolve over time, as more authoritative Iraqi voices emerge to broaden the discussion of reconstruction priorities and as a continued process of information and data-gathering allows us to further refine needs as we move forward. But it will be absolutely vital that both the humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction work are on the United Nations side, planned very much together; it is very much Kenzo Oshima's and my objective to keep these two processes — the humanitarian process that he leads here at Headquarters and the reconstruction process that I will lead — closely tied together so that they can move forward together.

In response to the question posed by the representative of Mexico about the United Nations capacity to manage this reconstruction, unfortunately we have had a lot of test runs. Post-conflict work has emerged for both UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) as critical parts of our global activities. In the case of UNDP, there are now some 50 to 60 countries where our Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery is engaged in a variety of activities. We obviously had a deep immersion in post-conflict planning and recovery in Afghanistan just a year ago. But I think that, critically, beyond the capacities of the United Nations institutions themselves, it is the partnerships that we have made with others — particularly in this case with the World Bank and the other international financial institutions — which have made us now into such a formidable force in this area, particularly when we are with a coalition — perhaps I should not use the term coalition — but with a group of donors who also are committed to this process. I think we can mount the kind of effort on the scale required by this situation.

I think the Ambassador's second question also provides part of the answer, which is the strength of Iraqi institutions, particularly civil society institutions, in playing their part. It was a comment by my colleagues who served in Iraq before this conflict, and who have returned since, that one of the things that gets so lost in the press coverage of the country is the enormous resilience of civil society organizations, both religious and secular, which in the absence of political freedom to express a point of view became the critical social glue of the society. And I think that utilizing these institutions as partners in the reconstruction is absolutely critical.

I think that in saying these things I have not touched on the issue of security. I can only echo the point made by so many of my own colleagues and then picked up by others that, of course, it remains a tremendously difficult issue and one that will have to be addressed effectively.

We were asked about demining, which in a sense is a dimension of security. We have sent a demining expert over there to work with colleagues from the United Nations Mine Action Service, the United Nations Office of Project Services and other parts of the United Nations. We are trying to get a handle on the demining problem. This is one area where, clearly, we need to work closely with the Authority, which has several hundred thousand deminers there at the moment. This is obviously something in which the military are very well trained, so we do not want to duplicate what the coalition forces are doing. On the other hand, we would very much like to build a national mine-clearing centre for the long term. So, we will be working with the Authority on how that can be done.

Finally, on the question of our relationship with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, let me just say that, obviously, he is going to be very much the lead figure for all of us in Iraq. The kinds of things that we have been talking about today — reconstruction planning and such — are the support that all of us from headquarters will give to that individual and the country team. But, just as Lakhdar Brahimi was our leader for Afghanistan, we look to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to play this same role for all of us in Iraq in the months ahead.

The President: I now give the floor Mr. David Nabarro, Executive Director at the World Health Organization.

Mr. Nabarro: I do not apologize for repeating some of what Mr. James Morris said at the beginning. This interest is extraordinary for us, and I wish all our staff could have been here to witness it. I shall try to convey to them much of what I have heard.

I would like to comment under six headings. First, I felt that it was Mexico that fingered the key issue of the complete vacuum in authority and the breakdown of the State. Cameroon asked to what extent there is a problem of leadership in the hospitals. I would reply that it is not so much that leadership is lacking but that leaders of the hospitals are not sure who they are working for. That sense of slight confusion has caused some problems in these early weeks.

Again in relation to this vacuum of authority, Germany asked why people were looting. Our experience is the extraordinary phenomenon of Government staff who work in the hospitals: they are absolutely not those who are looting, even though they have the best opportunity to do so. In fact, many of them stayed in their hospitals and themselves stood guard. They went and pleaded with soldiers to come and put their tanks or other defences outside the hospitals. They have also been working for many weeks without pay, and yet they have been turning up to work. So, we must recognize that if there has been looting, it has rarely been the Government workers themselves who have looted; it is others. I am afraid we ourselves in the World Health Organization (WHO) are still quite unable to explain why it has been happening.

My second heading is the possible stabilizing influences that we can try to put in place in order to keep things a bit more under control. Most importantly, we feel — as has been said by others — that it is important to restore normality for the time being, to get the system working again. That means that there has to be some visible authority, legitimacy and, of course, security in localities.

We were asked, again by Cameroon, about the impact of insecurity in the health sector. Basra is one example. Although it is possible to distribute supplies inside the city, going out to the more isolated parts of the governorate is difficult without a military escort. While it has been possible to negotiate a military escort for distribution on certain occasions, there are other priorities facing the military, and regular escorts have been hard to establish. But there is no doubt that if the services are back and are working and if there is an element of security, then this phenomenon of taking over hospitals and other institutions — which was identified by Germany, Chile and France — is not so likely. We have seen this particularly in smaller institutions in Baghdad. The phenomenon does not seem to have spread too widely, and our view is that the more quickly we can get the systems back and working again as they should, equitably accessible to all, the less likely we are to have sections of the community taking over and running institutions according to their rules. Predictability of life, and confidence in that predictability, matters.

That brings me to my third heading: restarting the work of the public service. Many members of the Council have commented on how that can best be done. I agree that involving Iraqis in the response is critical.

Secondly, as was said by Mexico, there is the need to restore institutions that are already there — as Mark Malloch Brown just said — and are already strong. But restoring their self-confidence to work again is so important. That is where I would like to pay tribute to the role of the Authority, particularly in recent days, which has explicitly been working hard to let the Iraqi institutions feel empowered again and to encourage links between the United Nations and those institutions.

Thirdly, with respect to salaries — thank goodness we are going to get salaries paid shortly. That is going to make such a difference. I heard it said it was to be in Baghdad. I hope it will be more than Baghdad as quickly as possible.

Fourthly, with respect to communications, particularly telecommunications, governorates being able to talk to Baghdad matters so much.

My fourth heading is coordination. I want to stress that there have been lots of very valuable contributions from Governments to the health sector. Bulgaria, China and Spain described their contributions. The United States and the United Kingdom are making many contributions. It is great that we have many actors involved in the health sector. It means that there is a lot of innovation and new ideas. But it has one disadvantage: it is sometimes difficult to get everybody to work according to common principles, whether those are common principles on how we will work with Iraqis or on how we handle different problems. That leads to a degree of unevenness in the way in which services are being provided. So, as we have these multiple actors involved, let us also emphasize the importance of working together and making coordination effective. That is where the role of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, which is working with different elements of the Government of Iraq, is so important.

I think that compared with other settings, the United Nations is doing well, as has already been said. We have a single work programme under the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (UNOHCI), and we are very much being encouraged by the Deputy Secretary-General to stick to that.

We were asked what our relationship to the Authority was like. All I would say is that it has been quite challenging, and it evolves. But it is utterly different now from what it was like a week ago. I would like to publicly state that I think there is a really new and exciting spirit of working together, in Baghdad and in other places. That is something on which we can all build. I believe that with the resolution that has been passed today, we will be able to do more.

Moving to my fifth heading, Syria asked about the situation with the oil for food pipeline, what it was like and how had we been working on it. I would like to give you a quick insight as to what it is like from the health side. The oil for food pipeline has been used to bring at least 20,000 different items of medicines and medical goods into Iraq during the period from 1996 to the present. They were a mix of urgently needed and lower priority goods. What we have done is try to tie it down to a small number of priorities, approximately a thousand. We have also tried within the short time available to increase the number of things coming through that pipeline.

But I want to stress that it is not easy trying to keep a pipeline going and make it effective in a situation where the mechanism is being turned on, turned off and changed at quite regular intervals. We are very anxious about how we can take full advantage of the oil for food programme before the 3 June deadline. We are also quite anxious about how we will then be able to make the transition to the new mechanism and get the best out of it before the end of December deadline. I hope that the Council will look at the oil-for-food changeover operation and, if it looks like it needs more time, the Council will say so.

In conclusion, this is an alarming situation, as some members of the Council have stated. It is very challenging, but it is fast-moving. Now it looks as though, with the resolution, we have got solidarity with the people of Iraq and convergence, together with a strong commitment from the Authority, expressed here and in Iraq. There is good consensus on issues and approaches.

We personally, in the World Health Organization, predict that because of so many positive factors, things will greatly improve in the foreseeable future. We will have in place a system that delivers services to people in the way they need them well before the end of the year. We will continue to provide regular briefings on the health situation on the WHO web site. I hope that this will enable members of the Council to keep up to date with what is happening. I am sorry for rushing those words. Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Nils Kastberg, Director at the United Nations Children's Fund.

Mr. Kastberg: Let me begin by endorsing the gratitude expressed by Mr. Morris to you, Sir, and to the rest of the Council. Our colleague from the World Food Programme (WFP) is very humble; I do not think that ever before in history so much food has been moved in such a short time under such circumstances. The WFP is doing brilliant work.

Let me also reinforce all the points that my colleagues have made on the issue of coordination. We are not only working very well together; we also happen to be very good friends. Ramiro Lopes da Silva, our Humanitarian Coordinator, is certainly an old colleague and friend. But this coordination also extends to the broader community of the Red Cross movement and to non-governmental organizations. A delegate from Oxfam, for instance, is doing the water coordination on behalf of the system. So we are open to a much broader community as part of a greater collaborative effort.

In terms of the questions regarding funds, 50 per cent of the Flash Appeal has been funded as it relates to the United Nations Children's Fund, and we are extremely grateful for that. But obviously we are only half way there. We have a relatively short timescale, so we are looking at strengthening that part.

China, Russia and France raised the issue of the recent resolutions — 1472 (2003) and 1476 (2003). We adopted 19 contracts under that oil-for-food programme to a total value of $40 million, and certainly in the context of the new resolution we hope to strengthen routine immunization and additional contracts, at least in water and sanitation, as well as, perhaps, in other areas.

Let me turn briefly to three other areas. Syria raised the question of education; the United States made suggestions about reducing malnutrition; and the United Kingdom and Germany spoke about issues of security.

With regard to the question from Syria about the rates of enrolment, certainly before the war it was in the region of 75 per cent, which was too low in our opinion. The normalization process has not been completed, and the enrolment rates are therefore still very low — below the earlier figure. We see a need to strengthen that. I would like to make some remarks in that regard. Much of the school system has been dilapidated for years. We have noted that when a school is improved physically, the enrolment rate is higher. That is certainly one area in which we will need to work. In fact, on average we have seen a 35 per cent attendance increase when the physical facilities are improved.

Much more work needs to be done in terms of modern teaching methodologies. The curriculum has not been updated for 20 years, and we also know that there are gender discrepancies, with many girls not going to school. We have some schools that are in dangerous locations at the moment because of the problem of landmines and unexploded ordnance. These are issues that will need to be tackled. Certainly there will also be a need for additional schools, because many schools are doing a double shift at the moment. As for the software aspect, the top-down style of teaching certainly needs to be changed in order to promote children's participation. That is a generic type of recommendation that we work on in many places.

On secondary education, regrettably, examinations were disrupted. An examination board could not be constituted and therefore it has not been possible to design an examination. That is bad news on the secondary education side.

On the primary education side, we are at the moment actually printing the examination booklets and materials for the annual exams, which are supposed to take place quite soon. We hope that at least that part will progress.

Again, security questions were raised in relation to school attendance. I will come back to the question of security. In terms of oil-for-food requirements, we would certainly welcome investments in education. I have given examples of some areas that we need to strengthen.

Let me turn to the question posed by the representative of the United States regarding our advice on reducing malnutrition. First, we are appreciative of the brilliant work of the World Food Programme, which provides the general food basket. There are certainly a number of areas outside the food area that we need to tackle. The number-one priority is water and sanitation. It is the disruption in that area which, combined with the infant formula — the second point — is causing an enormous increase in diarrhoea. So we will be working with our colleagues in the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization on phasing out the infant formula. It cannot be cut immediately, but it needs to be phased out. It needs to be put into more of a therapeutic-type category, or at least combined with an attempt to encourage breastfeeding.

The third area is the need to ensure a therapeutic feeding referral system that functions. Obviously that is constrained at the moment because of security considerations. I think that down the line the whole

question of the availability of fresh food, and the income to be able to do that, will have a bearing on nutritional levels. Given recent events, the operations of the 3,000 community child centre units have been disrupted. Trying to get them operational again will require outreach to children throughout the country at the community level.

Those are some suggestions, and we certainly welcome further dialogue on concrete suggestions.

With regard to the questions from Germany and the United Kingdom on the impact of security and how it is felt more keenly, from our perspective, certainly, the fear felt by women and girls about going out is a major constraint. Obviously there is a hesitation on the part of parents to send children to school, and threats to girls by some communities to try to prevent them from going to school are obviously also a concern.

Another element is the limitations on the movement of United Nations staff, in terms not only of long-distance travel but actually of travelling inside the cities, which obviously creates difficulties by limiting the outreach of humanitarian actions. A broader type of area security that enables United Nations humanitarian action to engage with local communities is obviously important, therefore, in enhancing freedom of movement.

A further point is the repeated lootings. We have improved a number of water treatment plants, generating plants, pumps and so forth. We have made improvements, but they have been looted again. So obviously we are proceeding more keenly on security issues.

Other aspects of questions asked by the representatives of Mexico, Germany and other members have been covered by other colleagues, and I will not repeat their replies.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to convene this meeting. Certainly we will convey with appreciation the Council's interest to our colleagues in the field.

The President: I give the floor to the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr. Kellenberger: I, too, would like to thank you very much, Mr. President, for the trust that you have placed in the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which has, indeed, maintained a strong presence in the field at the most difficult times. I would like simply to tell the Council that it can count on our organization and that we will continue to fulfil the mandate entrusted to the ICRC by the Geneva Conventions, which also cover questions such as persons who are unaccounted for — a matter that has been raised in this meeting.

As far as health structures are concerned, especially hospitals, I said in my statement that in fact the hospital situation can vary widely from one place to another. There are administrative problems in some hospitals, and that is one of the reasons why, at an early stage, the ICRC was underlining very forcefully the importance of strengthening administrative structures in general and in the health sector in particular.

I would like to tell the Council that I was encouraged by what I heard regarding additional measures to be taken in order to improve security in Iraq.

As far as coordination is concerned, I would like to tell the Council that the ICRC, as an independent actor, has previous experience in coordinating our activities with those of United Nations agencies and other humanitarian actors. I think we have had good experiences in the past. I would simply like to say one thing with regard to coordination. Although it goes somewhat without saying, it is perhaps good to repeat it. A precondition for efficient coordination is always to have each actor trying to focus on his core competency and on areas in which he feels he has a competitive advantage. I think that is an important precondition for efficient coordination. I think that all of us humanitarian actors owe it to the donor community to avoid unnecessary duplication. We also owe it to the population of Iraq to carefully identify any gaps that may exist.

I thank the Council once again for inviting me to participate in this meeting.

The President: With the concurrence of the members of the Security Council, and in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I intend to give the floor to Mr. Kenzo Oshima, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

As I hear no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Oshima to take a seat at the Council table.

I thank Mr. Oshima for his participation, and give him the floor.

Mr. Oshima: After hearing my agency colleagues and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) so extensively and professionally cover the key issues, I am not certain what is left for me to say. But I would like to make a few salient points, if I may.

First of all, I too would like to convey my thanks for the support and encouragement expressed by all the members of the Security Council for the work done by United Nations humanitarian agencies. This is very encouraging and important to all of us engaged in the current humanitarian relief activities at Headquarters and, in particular, in the field under very difficult conditions.

My own recent visit to Baghdad, Basra and Umm Qasr, and my meetings with many of the actors involved and with the representatives of organizations, including the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) in Baghdad, confirm the key issues that have been touched upon repeatedly in today's discussion. Those issues are, first, security-related problems; secondly, the law and public order situation; and, thirdly, problems related to meeting recurrent costs, including the payment of salaries. My visit also confirmed the impression that, while a humanitarian catastrophe has been averted in Iraq, there are nevertheless very acute humanitarian needs in a number of sectors that must be addressed speedily. The security situation in Iraq, coupled with the serious salary, electricity and fuel problems, among others, clearly raises the prospect of a declining humanitarian situation that, if not addressed rapidly, could soon develop into serious humanitarian problems.

We therefore all welcome the measures that have been taken or are being planned by the coalition authorities. Those measures have been explained today by the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom. They have also been explained to me in my meetings with Ambassador Bremer of ORHA, as well as by the military representatives of the United Kingdom at Basra. This is a welcome step, and we all hope that these additional measures to improve the security situation will really begin to bear fruit soon.

I would like to mention that, as far as the coordination of humanitarian relief activities in Iraq is concerned, I believe that we have a reasonably well functioning mechanism in place, starting with the Humanitarian Coordinator, who is responsible for overall coordination, both within the United Nations system and between the United Nations system and other important actors, which of course include non-governmental organizations, our colleagues in the ICRC and, most important, ORHA. I believe we have a good team there working for the same objective, which is to bring relief and assistance to the people in need in Iraq. Along with ORHA, the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator and his team have established a cordial operational relationship that is functioning in Baghdad. That working relationship is being duplicated in various areas and in certain governorates in the north, centre and south of Iraq.

With regard to the Flash Appeal, as the Deputy Secretary-General mentioned in her remarks, we are looking at revising the Flash Appeal that was launched shortly after the outbreak of the conflict, at the end of March, with a view to revising it in the light of the new situation on the ground, as well as in the light of the resolution adopted by the Security Council today. To the extent possible, we will be conducting a needs assessment, covering as wide an area of the country as possible in order to come up with an appeal that will be sufficient to deal with current humanitarian problems. We intend to launch that revised humanitarian appeal some time in the second half of June.

Finally, I wish to say a word regarding the working relationship with the Iraqi people themselves. As has been noted by a number of members today and by my agency colleagues, there is a considerable amount of reliable and capable human resources, high skill levels and an institutional base available in Iraq. It has been disrupted momentarily, but it can be redeployed quickly once the security situation permits and salaries are paid.

Already, Iraqi professionals and senior ministerial officials — some of whom I met in Baghdad — have expressed their expectation that they will be consulted and involved early on and at all levels in the priority-setting and planning exercises for the revision of the humanitarian appeal and subsequent reconstruction project. I believe that this wish should be respected as far as possible.

The President: I believe that Mr. Oshima's remarks have summed up the very extensive discussion which we have had this morning and this afternoon with regard to the humanitarian response of the system to the humanitarian situation in Iraq.

I think that all of us would agree that this has been a very informative debate and that it has enhanced our understanding of the situation. I am sure that Council members have been reassured by the fact that the key humanitarian needs, such as food, electricity, water, sanitation and medical supplies and facilities, are all being addressed and receiving the attention of all concerned.

It is also heartening that the United Nations family seems to be working well together, as was confirmed just now by Mr. Oshima, and that it is working together with local Iraqi authorities, as well as with the coalition partners, now called the Authority under resolution 1483 (2003).

Thirdly, it would appear so far that the resources to undertake the humanitarian activities are available, including through the oil for food programme. Perhaps, with the changes that will be made under resolution 1483 (2003), there may be a need somewhere down the line to make a projection of needs and of the resources required to meet them. While we have discussed the humanitarian situation, the role of the United Nations has this morning been broadened considerably by the adoption of resolution 1483 (2003). These are aspects of the work of our Organization which we shall need to review and return to at some future point.

I would like to thank all the personalities who participated in this debate: the Deputy Secretary-General, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, the Executive Director of Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments of the World Health Organization, the Director of the Emergency Programmes of the United Nations Children's Fund, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross and, last but not least, Mr. Kenzo Oshima, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Following informal consultations with Council members and with their concurrence, I now call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to make a statement regarding the Council's proceedings this morning.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my pleasure to convey to you once again, Sir, our deep appreciation for all the efforts you have made and the serious work you have undertaken over the past few days.

Allow me to explain to you and to the members of the Security Council the decision of the Syrian Arab Republic with respect to resolution 1483 (2003), adopted by the Security Council this morning. We would have voted in favour of the resolution had we been granted the additional time for deliberation before the voting that we requested on more than one occasion. I shall now read out our explanation of vote:

> "For many years, Syria has called for the sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people to be lifted and for the mitigation of the consequences of the unjust embargo, including malnutrition and the lack of medicines. On the basis of the interest of the Government and people of Syria to improve the conditions of our brothers, the Iraqi people, we believed that we were compelled to vote in favour of the resolution despite our conviction that it fails to rise to the expectations and aspirations of the Iraqi people for their country to be a sovereign and united land and nation, enjoying their natural resources and playing an effective role in both the Arab and the international arenas.
>
> "Syria's vote in favour of the resolution can in no way be interpreted as a change in its position of rejecting the war against Iraq as illegitimate. We cannot imagine how the United Nations could legitimize foreign occupation. Along with other States members of the Security Council, Syria attempted to effect fundamental amendments to the draft resolution that were designed to give the United Nations a central role in Iraq and to ensure that the Iraqi people would enjoy the wealth of its country and the speediest possible end to the occupation of its land.
>
> "Syria's vote in favour of the resolution is in conformity with its ongoing desire for unity within the Security Council, which we believe to be the fundamental framework for the maintenance of international legitimacy."

I wish the position of Syria that I have just read out to be reflected in the official records of the Security Council. At a later stage, I shall convey to the Secretariat an official letter containing this statement.

The President: We take note of the statement made by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic and its implications for the resolution we adopted this morning.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

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Security Council

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Official communiqué of the 4763rd (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 28 May 2003, at 3 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 28 May 2003, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 4763rd meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations."

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